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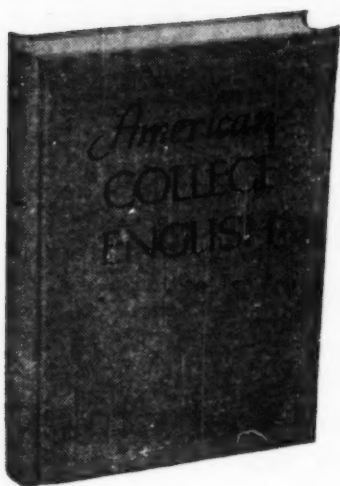
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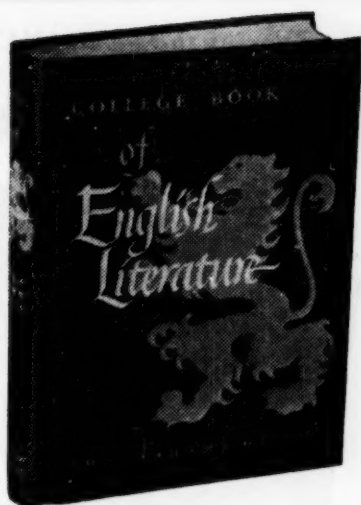
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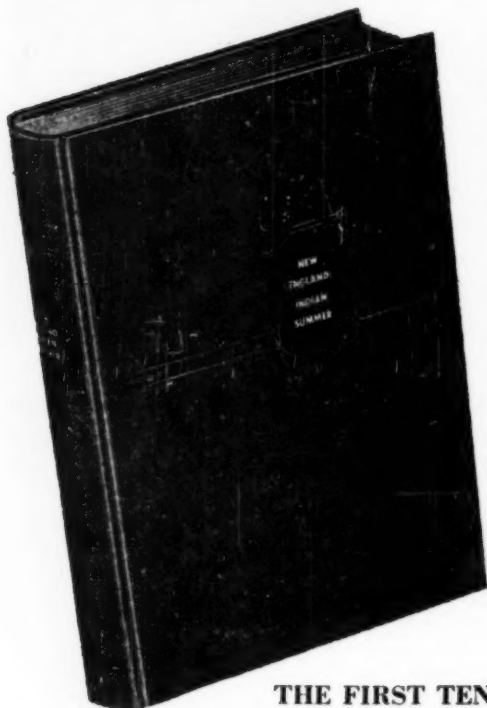
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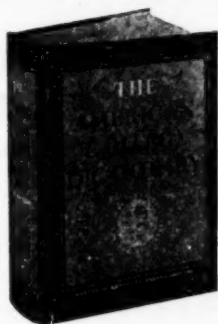
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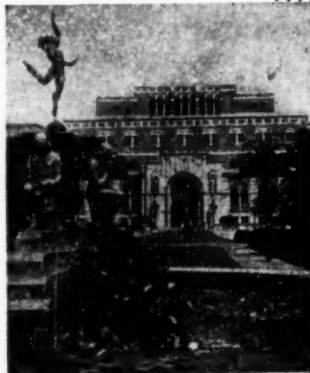
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Number 7

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I

WITH a guitar to strum and a sympathetic audience, Carl Sandburg could make Harry S. Truman's budget message sound, if not like "Lycidas," at least like Allen Tate's "Ode to the Confederate Dead." The hardest critical problem, for those of us who have on occasion been captivated by Sandburg's infectious grin, vibrant baritone, and communicable relish as he literally licks off the syllables in reciting his verse, is to decide how much of the joy of that experience belongs to the score, so to speak, and how much to the singer. The problem is not facily resolved by reading the verses to ourselves, for our mimetic imagination may be as commonplace as our vocal chords and the inward ear (however perceptive of the horns of elfland, faintly blowing) may be deaf to what one of the newer of the New Critics, drawing a happy analogy from the idea of "multiple meaning," may call the "multiple melody" or "total melody" of a poem. If the poet recited apparently dubious verses

with a magical lilt, lilt is intrinsic to the *proper* recitation of the verses, is it not? At least the case seems better for it than for finding modern meanings in *Hamlet* "which were far from clearly formulated in Shakespeare's conscious mind." Forced, however, to blink the problem of total melody, we may with some critical diffidence venture that an obvious music is discoverable in fewer of Sandburg's poems than in those of Frost, MacLeish, or Shapiro—or even in those of the not-so-obvious Mr. Eliot. It is clearly present in a handful of pieces, like "Cool Tombs" and "Four Preludes on Playthings of the Wind," but what music is there in "Chicago," "Mag," "To a Contemporary Bunkshooter," or "Child of the Romans"?

Yet these harsh and stridulous pieces, all from *Chicago Poems* (1916), had an instantaneous success with the public, without the aid of their composer's persuasive voice, for Sandburg did not begin his regular readings and recitations until four years later. "Chicago," published in 1914, certainly received as many renditions by as numerous declaimers as did Vachel Lindsay's "Congo" and "General

¹ Chairman of the English department, Washington Square College, New York University; author of *Intellectual America*.

William Booth Enters into Heaven," issued slightly earlier. To explain why readers of all sorts liked its bawling coarseness, the Kookaburra School of Critics may have to resort to the argument that cacophony succeeds only because the subconsciousness retains echoes of sweeter music and operates to heighten the discords ("Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard," etc.).

If one is an old-fashioned critic, or, better yet, a mere reader, "Chicago" and similar poems pose less difficulty. It is a simple matter of delight. The unnarcotized sensibility enjoys a succession of novel bursts of sound—witness the pleasure an infant can get from the floor and a cake pan. When the duration is limited and the uproar is organized, it is as capable of imparting sensual satisfaction as are melody and harmony. Perhaps the New Criticism has too much stressed music as an absolute essential of poetry; perhaps some qualification is indicated. Sonorous language can be a kind of marijuana which deadens the sensibility to the possibility of other delights. The novel union of harsh sounds with harsher facts (for at the intellectual level the harsh fact can stimulate like the harsh sound, so overlapping are the areas of pleasure and pain) and the arrangement of sounds and facts in a rhythmical pattern gave a generation delight when "Chicago" was published and is still capable of giving pleasure to an unjaded sensorium. If the second section of *The Waste Land*, with its "'Jug, Jug' to dirty ears," is poetry, Sandburg's salutatory is also poetry.

"Chicago" is a purely descriptive poem, and all one is entitled to get from it is a sense of something analogous to the effect that the city itself produces on the sensibilities, here refined and sharpened by art. But "Chicago" was not turned

out by an automaton functioning in the ether. It was written by a man with a history and social potentialities in the midst of a society which also had a history and potentialities. Hence "Chicago" has *implications* which no mere study of the poem itself or no thorough understanding of the connotations of its language can alone supply. A beginning is made in realizing the implications of "Chicago" by revealing the poem's source, which may reside in Lincoln Steffens' muckraking article, "Chicago: Half-Free and Fighting On":

Yes, Chicago. First in violence, deepest in dirt; loud, lawless, unlovely, ill-smelling, irreverent, new; an overgrown gawk of a village, the "tough" among cities, a spectacle for the nation; . . . I give Chicago no quarter and Chicago asks for none. "Good," they cheer, when you find fault; "give us the gaff. We deserve it and it will do us good." Taey do deserve it. . . .

Steffens' article was published in 1903 and collected in *The Shame of the Cities* in 1904. No one spotted it as the source of "Chicago" when that poem appeared in *Poetry* magazine ten years later. Certainly not a single reader sensed that the poem was a muckraking poem because Steffens motivated its creation; no, but muckraking had left a deep impression of critical tough-mindedness, and the insolent, hardheaded lust for his city that the poet exhibits in "Chicago" provoked reactions in a degree dependent on the channels of pleasure and pain established in the general consciousness by Steffens and the other muckrakers. Poetry awakens associations.

Further, when "Chicago" received book publication, it was in conjunction with other poems that enriched its implications. Pieces entitled "Halsted Street Car," "Clark Street Bridge," "A Teamster's Farewell," "Muckers," "Mag," and "Mamie" footnoted its brutality.

There is in the same volume another purely descriptive poem which also carries implications not to be got from the text alone and which contributes to the effect of "Chicago." Entitled "Dynamiter," it is a simple portrait of a man with whom the poet had supper in a German saloon, during which he learned that the man loved life and especially his wife and children. Yet nobody read it that way. Amy Lowell read it, was agitated, and lectured the poet:

That a man loves children, particularly his own, is a good and beautiful thing. But to use that fact as a dazzling screen to obscure the horror of his trade of blowing other men into atoms. . . . He does not justify his dynamiter, it is true, but he looks at him obliquely, leaving out what he does not wish to see, because of his sympathy with the opinions that the man represents. Propaganda is the pitfall of poets. So excellently endowed a poet as Mr. Sandburg should beware.

Indubitably this is bad criticism, but it does take cognizance of the implications of the poem. The total impact of this poem, and what the poet meant should be the impact, involved a knowledge of what was going on contemporaneously in the strife between capital and labor. Total meaning cannot be had without this background. "Chicago" cannot be properly appreciated unless the reader knows these facts, unless he knows that its author also wrote "Dynamiter" and published the poems together for their complementary effect.

II

The Carl Sandburg of *Chicago Poems* was an experienced journalist with radical convictions. Son of August Johnson, a Swedish Lutheran immigrant who had changed his name because both the town of Galesburg, where he settled, and the railroad gang, in which he worked, were already blessed with too many Johnsons, Carl Sandburg had gone to work at thir-

teen, taking the sort of jobs a laborer's son usually gets. The Spanish-American War had provided an exciting interlude in the sequence of these jobs and the means to go to Lombard College. While he was at Lombard his literary talents had been discovered and encouraged by his English teacher, Professor Philip Green Wright; the latter issued Sandburg's first book, an iconoclastic miscellany entitled *In Reckless Ecstasy* (1904), which Wright set up and printed on a press in his own basement. In a promotional preface the teacher describes his pupil as looking like "one of the 'proletariat' rather than one of the 'intellectuals'" and prophesied that he would travel "the Gorky line to literary fame"—by riding the rods of freight cars. And so it proved in part. After quitting college in his senior year, Sandburg was a wanderer until 1907, when he became an editor of *The Lyceumite*, a journal published for Chautauqua and lyceum workers and lecturers. During his connection with this paper Sandburg himself lectured several times, always on Whitman, whose disciple he had shown himself to be in the few free-verse poems published in *In Reckless Ecstasy*. Already left-wing and by now able to appear before gatherings on easy terms, Sandburg was induced by Winfield R. Gaylord in 1908 to go to Milwaukee as district organizer for the Social-Democratic party. Led by such men as Victor Berger, Dan Hoan, and Gaylord, the Social-Democratic party of Wisconsin was a Marxist-revisionist organization, with evolutionary rather than revolutionary aims.

Though Sandburg was forced to give up his position as party organizer after marrying Lillian Steichen in June, 1908, he remained an active worker; in fact, his volunteer services as a speaker at outdoor rallies of Swedes and Germans in

the campaign of 1910 led to his being appointed private secretary to Emil Seidel, the successful candidate for mayor. Both before and after this job, Sandburg was a news reporter, usually covering labor news. He was induced to leave Milwaukee journalism by an offer from the *Chicago Daily Socialist*, which, during a strike affecting other dailies, was enjoying great prosperity under a new name as the *Chicago World* and needed to augment its editorial staff. The step was a disastrous one, for when the strike was settled circulation fell off and Sandburg was let go. Out of work for several weeks, he was fortunate to catch on with the *Day Book*, a Scripps publication which did not accept advertising and consequently gave its writers some freedom in expressing themselves. He then transferred to an "efficiency" magazine called *System*, moved to the *National Hardware Journal*, and then back to the *Day Book*, all in a comparatively short time. He was working for the *Day Book* when "Chicago" and other poems of his appeared in Harriet Monroe's magazine; it was no resentment against his immediate circumstances that produced the social criticism found in *Chicago Poems*. That probably came from the haunting terror of being out of work with a wife and child to support following his dismissal by the *World*; Sandburg, who certainly had known many periods of unemployment, told Karl Detzer, his biographer, that this was the period when he was frightened.

Belligerent radicalism, beyond anything advocated by the Wisconsin Social-Democrats, caught the attention of the readers and reviewers of *Chicago Poems*. Tingling, they nevertheless shuddered away from the sinister vengeance for social wrongs implied in "I Am the People, the Mob"

When I, the People, learn to remember, when I, the People, use the lessons of yesterday and no longer forget who robbed me last year, who played me for a fool—then there will be no speaker in all the world say the name: "The People," with any fleck of sneer in his voice or any far-off smile of derision.

They did not like his definition of "government in action" as militiamen with rifles breaking up picket lines during a strike. More conditioned to believe Guy Empey than Sandburg, they did not like the latter's war poems, which had no sweetening of glory, but emphasized the horror and dirt and the brute stupidity of the people in being led to slaughter. They were incensed at the vulgar attack on the Reverend "Billy" Sunday, who had recently brought a hundred thousand souls to Jesus, as a "bunkshooter" and the tool of "bankers, businessmen, and lawyers." They were shocked that he viewed the "soiled doves" of prostitution with a sympathy hitherto reserved in literature for ladies; that he could defend a chorus girl "who was not a harlot until she married a corporation lawyer." To them he seemed indiscriminating in his love for hobos and muckers, and for "Jack" who was "a swarthy, swaggering son-of-a-gun." Nearly every reviewer belabored Sandburg for writing "propaganda," a new and ominous word. The *Boston Transcript* deplored the poet's "strong unpleasant imagination." And even the *Dial*, friendly to new letters, denounced him as "a mystical mobocrat." Yet it is clear that, while they denounced, they were fascinated by what they denounced. Sandburg won by force and noise.

The poet, however, was never again to be as brash as in *Chicago Poems*. The tapering begins with *Cornhuskers*, in which, if one excludes the war poems, only two would have been thought really radical in 1918 when the book appeared

—"Memoir of a Proud Boy" (an elegy written for Don Macgregor, a working-class hero of the Ludlow tent massacre) and "Always the Mob." A comparison of the latter with "I Am the People, the Mob" shows a marked softening; among other things the mob is now "Layers of worms eating rocks and forming loam and valley floors for potatoes, wheat, watermelons." *Smoke and Steel* (1920), Sandburg's thickest volume of verse, has only 3 poems out of 189 that the radicals could claim as theirs. So far as radical causes were concerned in *Smoke and Steel*, Sandburg's attitude might have been epitomized in

I can keep my shirt on.
I can stick around and sing like a little bird. . . .

There are no left-wing poems in *Slabs of the Sunburnt West* (1922) or in *Good Morning, America* (1928). Had Sandburg yielded to the critics, become bored with left-wing materials, or counted himself out of the radical movement?

III

Beginning with *Cornhuskers* Sandburg relaxed his interest in socialism and acquired slowly an interest in the perdurable things in America. As he discovered them, these were, successively, the land, traditions, and the liberal spirit, but only grudgingly institutions. He retains to the moment, for example, a suspicion of courts, judges, and the law. Sandburg's love of the land has a mystical quality—a belief that the land will shape people to good ends. This takes the form of sheer exuberance in "Prairie," in which the voice of the land is sustaining, is prophetic:

I nourished the lonely men on horses.
I will keep the laughing men who ride iron. . . .
I speak of new cities and new people.
I tell you the past is a bucket of ashes.

I tell you yesterday is a wind gone down, a sun
dropped in the west.

I tell you there is nothing in the world,
only an ocean of tomorrows,
a sky of tomorrows.

It has not been remarked that this theme is one of the most generative in Sandburg's poetry. If "Onion Days" provided Horace Gregory with suggestions for his proletarian *Chelsea Rooming House* and if "Four Preludes on Playthings of the Wind" was found stimulating by the author of the Symbolist symphony *The Waste Land*, this idea of the good power of the American land, traced out in many poems, not only contributed to, but changed the direction of, the poetry of Hart Crane and Archibald MacLeish, who had begun as Decadents. Both kept its mystical quality, especially MacLeish in his *Frescoes*:

She's a tough land under the corn mister:
She has changed the bone in the cheeks of many
races. . . .
It may be she can change the word in the book.

Committing himself definitely to the liberal cause, if only in part, was apparently the hardest thing for Sandburg to do. In all the volumes of verse, save *The People, Yes* (1936), there is little that is commendatory of, or even conciliatory to, the democratic way of life, unless it be concealed in the reflection that the young country was good, as in the title poem in *Good Morning, America*, but "Something happened, always something happens. . . . History is a box of tricks." Significantly he does not make the "something" the industrial revolution. With *The People, Yes*, however, Sandburg definitely abandons the Marxist philosophy, pure or revisionist, for the liberal way of looking at things. He puts an old socialist dictum as a question, "Hunger and only hunger changes worlds?" and answers it with, "Yes and no, no and

yes." The stronger will win, to be sure, but the stronger for him is now a dream:

Across the bitter years and the howling winters
the deathless dream will be the stronger
the dream of equity will win.

"The dream of equity"—such is not the language of the *Communist Manifesto*, or of Bernstein, the revisionist, or of Kautsky, or of Debs, or of Berger; Sandburg himself equates the phrase with the more famous phrases of Lincoln: "of the people, by the people, and for the people." Later in the poem the New Deal is defended as the true beginning of the people's surge toward their rights. The poet wants the argument about "planned economy" to go on:

Are we slowly coming to understand
the distinction between a demagogue
squawking
and the presentation of tragic plainspoken
fact?

After damning dictators, Sandburg tells us that the "free man is a rare bird" and asks us to "take a good look at him and try to figure him out" because

Some day when the United States of the Earth
gets going and runs smooth and pretty
there will be more of him than we have
now.

The political point of view achieved in *The People, Yes* is vigorously perpetuated in *Home Front Memo* (1942), a miscellany of Sandburg's wartime utterances in prose and verse, save that it follows sedulously, if truculently, White House policy and the hope for a brave new world; and it is sentimentalized in Sandburg's long, unwieldy novel, *Remembrance Rock* (1948). Lest this final avatar be thought the choice of an aged and weak man, the reader should consult Sandburg's side of his controversy with Charles A. Lindbergh in articles like "Pure American Hybrid," collected in *Home Front Memo*, where the old man seems to wield a pretty cutlass, even if it is a dry month.

In brief, this is the intellectual history of the "mystical mobocrat" poet Carl Sandburg, a history of retrogression or of progress, as you will. In our sight, it is the latter, for, quite aside from our conviction that a surrender to a Marxist, Leninist, or Stalinist dictatorship means a surrender of all, the Sandburg of *Chicago Poems* was a deep-feeling, effective artist but not a profound thinker, as his implied indorsement of "the propaganda of the deed"—of dynamiting—indicates. But between *Chicago Poems* and *The People, Yes* Sandburg had brooded the shaping power of the land and the meaning of our traditions. In the latter part of that time he had spent years in research and writing upon Lincoln—research and writing that eventually produced *Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years* (1926), *Mary Lincoln: Wife and Widow* (1932), and *Abraham Lincoln: The War Years* (1939). In that time he had learned the hardest lesson mankind has to learn, chiefly from one of the greatest teachers, the savior of our own Republic—that one may burn with indignation but must be patient for right in the right way. If there is a kind of mysticism in the faith he arrives at, it is his own mysticism joined to Lincoln's: "The people will live on."

IV

The history of a man as a thinker and his development as an artist do not perfectly coincide, though the chief things are usually written along the line of fundamental growth. There can be no doubt that the substantial achievements of Sandburg's career are late things: *The People, Yes* and *Abraham Lincoln: The War Years*. Diffuse, occasionally rambling, and sometimes long-winded, *The People, Yes* is still a splendid organic growth. Nowhere else in poetry is there such a survey of the people's business, their routine affairs, their employments, their concerns. Nowhere, not even in

Poor Richard, is there a better treasury of their "animal wisdom": here are saws, adages, riddles, Irish bulls, wisecracks, and fence-rail syllogisms. "How can you compete with a skunk?" "The coat and pants do the work but the vest gets the gravy." Here are chronicled their diversifications, all the way from the story of the man who was feeding a hatful of doughnuts to a horse, explaining to the curious, "I want to see how many he'll eat before he asks for a cup of coffee," to their everlasting pursuit of "the mazuma, the jack, the shekels, the kale," on which Sandburg pens a savage ode. Here all the chuckleheadedness of the people is exposed in such a way that tolerant contempt is not the upshot, but amused pity, deeper understanding. Sandburg may scorch "the eggheaded investing public," he may define the people as "a plucked goose," he may pronounce them childlike, blundering, sleepy; but he brings one up with, "When have the people been half as rotten as what the panderers to the people dangle before crowds?" Only here, and still in verse, are catalogued all the grievous wrongs, the abasements of the average and the less than average man, together with the sins of his betters. Yet here, in a sort of magic undertone, are heard the stirrings of a slow but inevitable justice. Only the "Song of Myself" is more of a grab bag, more of an omnium-gatherum; only the "Song of Myself" attempts as much; yet one does not surpass the other in hope or in poetry.

Abraham Lincoln: The War Years is hard to evaluate because of its sheer size—four volumes, 2,503 pages, and over 1,078,365 words by the author's count. Sandburg's twelve-year effort to gather everything together made his problem of organization especially difficult, and it cannot be said that he has always solved it. He has what is sup-

posed to be the professor's love of facts on to which he grafts the poet's love of legend, but his attention to detailing each is such that perspective is lost among the trees. The very richness of *The War Years* will always lure investigators; out of it perhaps innumerable other books will be born. But it is not a mere compilation, a stitching-together of endless notes. It is a piece of devoted writing by a man from the same region from which Lincoln came, possessed by the same love for the people that Lincoln had, experienced in the same humble employments, delighted by the same sort of antics, refreshed by the same jokes. Devotion is the staying power of the work, but some of its weaknesses come from an excess of devotion, as in the turgid, dithyrambic close of the chapter describing the effect on the people of Lincoln's death. By contrast, Sandburg is supremely effective in bringing his chapter "Lincoln Speaks at Gettysburg" to a close; in simple language he describes the battlefield, now deserted, as night gathers, pauses at a row of graves where an unidentified boy sleeps, and then looks to the sleeping boy's village under the sky of night. Generally the prose is simple; overwriting, which in a degree marred *The Prairie Years*, is uncommon. In substance, *The War Years* is notable for some of its portraits of the men around Lincoln, of his opponents and backers both North and South, of army generals, of office-seekers, manipulators, scalawags, and scoundrels; for its perceptions of what wartime Washington was like; for its understanding revelation of the anxieties of the private soldier and the common man; and for its richly documented history of public and private opinion. The best chapters are those more especially concentrated on the President: "Office Seekers" (in which Lincoln's wonderful abilities in man-to-man exchange are displayed, his

sinewyness of mind, his fiber), "The Man Had Become the Issue" (in which is made plain how much the President meant as a symbol), and "Lincoln's Laughter—and His Religion" (perhaps best of all, with its appreciation of how much his ability to joke relieved the man of the pressures of office; with its inclusion of other humorists, professional and lay, friends of the President; with its stories on Lincoln; and with its examination of Lincoln's hidden faith and mysticism). Sandburg's understanding of the relative values of men is intuitive and, in the main, sure; hence the judgments are usually acceptable. One does not find in *The War Years*, however, the critical insights displayed in such recent examples of good Lincoln scholarship as *Lincoln and the Radicals* and *Lincoln and the Patronage*. But Sandburg brings the reader closer to the President than he gets in these books. For its color and feeling, for its qualitative density on these two scores, *The War Years* is one of the great works on Lincoln.

With both *The People, Yes* and *The War Years* the reader inevitably wishes that Sandburg had not written quite so much. The much has a way of swamping the excellencies. And this is true of the product of the whole career. There are too many free-verse poems, too many that the baritone voice persuaded the poet were better than they are, too few in which the core idea and the lines are essentially poetic. Yet the few stand up, although the passage of years has made us more exacting than we were when Sandburg emerged as a poet. Enough perhaps has been implied as to the merits of the good poetry in the main line of Sandburg's development, though not all of the good poetry, of course, in that line has been cited. "Balloon Faces," for example, is proletarian in its way of looking at

bourgeois feeding and at once better poetry and propaganda than some of the pieces that we have examined. Counter to a will that demands social action, there is in Sandburg an illogical fatalism that has produced some of his finest poetry. It is responsible for "Four Preludes on Playthings of the Wind"—a vivid commentary on the vanity of man. All that can be achieved for tonal effect with free verse is probably attained in this poem; hiatus is nowhere better managed. The *Ubi sunt qui ante fuerunt* variant of fatalism is admirably expressed in "Cool Tombs." "They All Want To Play Hamlet" is a healthier setting-forth of the current antiromanticism than are most other artists' treatments of that theme. Sandburg was cognizant enough of what the Imagists were doing to imitate their effects in his own idiom, hence imagist poems like "Fog" and "Nocturne in a Deserted Brickyard." The skill with which the better poems are turned suggests that Sandburg might have achieved finish with a larger number of his poems had he made the effort; inevitably, had he done that, he would have enriched their texture—a want of which is felt in most of his poetry. One suspects that some inclination to maintain his role of mobocrat stifled the artist. Inventiveness and sensibility have been sacrificed for the polemical. But, though he has shifted political allegiance in his maturity, Sandburg has remained the consistent friend of the workingman if not of that abstraction, the proletariat. To represent workmen always correctly in verse is an achievement of merit. As certainly as if he had chosen to be a labor lawyer, Sandburg has sacrificed to this aim in his time reputation that he might have achieved, and it has cost him a portion of his immortality. But given his conscience he could not do otherwise.

Dickens and the Scandalmongers

EDWARD WAGENKNECHT¹

"You must not tell us what the soldier, or any other man, said, Sir," interposed the judge, "it's not evidence."—*The Pickwick Papers*.

I

MEN have died from time to time," says Rosalind, "and worms have eaten them, but not for love." Charles Dickens did not die for love, but love was the bitterest thing in his life; as a lover he could only be described as an unhappy and unfortunate man. He gave the devotion of his youth to a silly girl named Maria Beadnell, who rejected him. He married an estimable woman who was in almost every conceivable respect eminently unfitted to live with him—as he with her—and after many years they separated. And for a long time that was all the world thought it knew about his amatory experiences.

Of late he has acquired a number of biographers who imagine themselves to know much more. But let us see.

The war began on April 3, 1934, with the publication of an article by Thomas Wright in the *London Daily Express*. The next year this article was taken up, in a modified form, into the same writer's *Life of Charles Dickens*. The late Hugh Kingsmill immediately accepted Wright's evidence in *The Sentimental Journey: A Life of Charles Dickens*, also published in 1935.²

¹ Professor of English, Boston University. Author of *The Man Charles Dickens, Cavalcade of the English Novel*, etc.

² There had been a kind of preliminary skirmish in 1928 when C. E. Bechhofer-Roberts published a very bad biographical novel about Dickens, called *This Side Idolatry*. But though Mr. Bechhofer-

Since 1934-35, Ellen Lawless Ternan has become one of the leading characters in the Victorian literary mythology. It had long been known that she had acted with Dickens in 1857 in *The Frozen Deep*, that this had led to a friendship between them, and that he had left her £1,000 in his will. It had been fairly well established also that Mrs. Dickens did not like her and that Mrs. Dickens' mother and one of her sisters had made allegations which, at the time of the separation of Mr. and Mrs. Dickens in 1858, the novelist had compelled them to retract. It was Ellen Ternan, in other words, whom Dickens sought to protect when he declared publicly that

two wicked persons who should have spoken very differently of me in consideration of earned respect and gratitude [had] . . . coupled with this separation the name of a young lady for whom I have a great attachment. . . . Upon my soul and honor, there is not on this earth a more virtuous and spotless creature than that young lady. I know her to be innocent and pure, and as good as my own dear daughters.

He declared further that "all the late whispered rumors" concerning his marital difficulties were "abominably false" and that whosoever should repeat one of them hereafter would "lie as wilfully and

Roberts presented Dickens as a kind of Pecksniff, he did not pretend that his relations with Ellen Ternan were other than essentially innocent. Neither did Ralph Straus, in his *Charles Dickens: A Biography from New Sources* (also 1928), the first biographer of Dickens, I believe, to mention Ellen's name.

foully as it is possible for any false witness to lie, before heaven and earth."

What now did Thomas Wright have to add to what had hitherto been known and believed?

Wright did not doubt that Dickens' statement about Ellen Ternan was true at the time it was made. But, "no great while after," he "prevailed upon Miss Ternan to become his mistress." She "gave herself reluctantly" and for greed of gold. In her mother's name—that of the actress, Fanny Ternan, a lady of unquestioned respectability—Dickens took a house for her in Houghton Place, and here "he visited her two or three times a week." On Sunday nights the composer Francesco Berger was often invited, and Mrs. Ternan would also be present. Then the two women and the two men would play cards together, or Berger might play the piano while Dickens and Ellen sang duets.

This much—with the addendum to be noted hereinafter—was the First Act. The Second took place four years later, when one Gladys Storey published in London a book called *Dickens and Daughter*, in which she sought to place the posthumous authority of Dickens' younger daughter, Mrs. Kate Perugini, behind the Ternan scandal. According to Miss Storey, Dickens made no secret of his love for Ellen, forced his wife to visit her, and made a settlement upon her even before the separation. Moreover, she bore him a child, a son, who died in infancy.³

³ In the controversy occasioned by the publication of his charges against Dickens, Wright had already asserted, in letters to J. W. T. Ley and Walter Dexter, that "THERE WERE CHILDREN." See *The Dickensian*, XXXIII (1936), 48-49, 51. With Miss Storey "CHILDREN" shrinks to "child," which does not tend to increase the reader's confidence. Mr. Ley challenged the Ternan scandal more insistently and more effectively than any other writer, and I am glad to avow my indebtedness to him, both in his published writings and in many private letters. I much regret that Mr. Ley's untimely death pre-

In May, 1869, she came to Gad's Hill to stay. (This on p. 129, though on p. 137 she is fetched to Gad's Hill after Dickens' fatal seizure.) The last time his daughter talked with Dickens he wished he had been a better father and a better man. He was in fact "a very wicked man." Life was "hell" at Gad's Hill when he was in control, and his daughter married Charles Collins, whom she did not love, to get away from her father.

Thomas Wright and Gladys Storey are the only writers on the Dickens scandal who have claimed to present fresh evidence. Before we examine this "evidence," let us see what has happened to the Dickens-Ternan liaison in criticism and biography published since 1939.

1. Mr. Edmund Wilson has the distinction of having been the first well-known critic to swallow the Wright-Storey thesis, hook, line, and sinker. See Mr. Wilson's long essay, "Dickens: The Two Scrooges," in *The Wound and the Bow: Seven Studies in Literature* (1941). At no point does Mr. Wilson give the reader any indication of the nature of the evidence upon which his account of the liaison rests. At no point does he suggest that there is any element of doubt about the matter. He reports that Ellen Ternan was Dickens' mistress in quite the same manner in which he reports that Catherine Hogarth was Dickens' wife.⁴

2. The next witness is Professor Lio-

vented his completing the book he planned to write on the subject of this article. See, in *The Dickensian*, his "Dickens and His Wife," XXXI (1935), 226-30; "What the Soldier Said," XXXII (1935), 15-21; "More of What the Soldier Said," XXXIII (1936), 47-51; "The Double Tragedy of Mary Hogarth," XXXIII (1937), 205-11; "Father and Daughter," XXXV (1939), 250-53.

⁴ Mr. Wilson's critical irresponsibility in his essay on Dickens matches his frivolity as a scholar, but to discuss this aspect of his paper would carry me too far afield. I have, however, already dealt with it in my review of *The Wound and the Bow*, *Modern Language Quarterly*, III (1942), 161-64.

nel Stevenson, writing on "Dickens's Dark Novels, 1851-1857," in the *Sewanee Review*, LI (1943), 398-409. Much of Mr. Stevenson's criticism in this article is sound. But on the matter being considered here he writes unequivocally and without qualification: "In April, 1857, he [Dickens] met and fell violently in love with eighteen-year-old Ellen Ternan, and a year later he officially separated from his wife and installed Miss Ternan in her stead."

3. Early in 1946 the late Dame Una Pope-Hennessy published the first full-length biography of Charles Dickens to have been written since the immense collection of his *Letters* in "The None-such Dickens" became available in 1938. In general, she did an admirable piece of work. Yet she accepted the Ternan scandal in all its ramifications, referring to both Wright and Miss Storey, though one statement, in a footnote on page 401—"In telling the story I have relied not on Mr. Wright but on the information supplied by Dickens's own daughter, Mrs. Perugini"—would seem to indicate that she considers Miss Storey the more reliable witness.

4. In 1948 Mr. W. Somerset Maugham, having announced that he would write no more novels of his own, generously and unselfishly took upon himself the task of cutting and editing some of the great novels of the world in order that he might reintroduce them to modern readers in what might presumably have been their original form had the writers in question only first had the opportunity to take counsel with him. *David Copperfield* being one of the novels to benefit by these blessed ministrations, it was republished in its improved form, and in a format designed to appeal to young readers, with an introduction by Mr. Maugham, which had previously appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*. In its relation to sub-

stance in the Ellen Ternan matter, Mr. Maugham's Introduction can only be described as generously eclectic. For good Measure, Mr. Maugham managed to drag into print, for the first time so far as I know, the hitherto word-of-mouth gossip to the effect that Mrs. Dickens "drank"—(Do I hear a cry of "Shame, J. Steerforth!"?)—and also to revive the old rumor that there was a love affair between Dickens and his sister-in-law, Georgina Hogarth. But on this last matter, it should be said, Mr. Maugham is characteristically magnanimous. "It is very probably true," he pontificates, that Dickens had no sexual relations with Miss Hogarth.

5. Finally, 1949, and with it the latest word on the subject—though I do not deceive myself that it will be the last.⁵ Mr. Hesketh Pearson has a new biography: *Dickens, His Character, Comedy, and Career*. And here it is all over again, and all stated as established fact: Dick-

⁵ My crystal ball was working well when I made this statement! The year 1949 added at least three other items: Clifton Fadiman's Introduction to Simon & Schuster's "Inner Sanctum Edition" of *The Pickwick Papers*, magnificently illustrated by Frederick Banberry (in which, among other things, John Forster was described as Dickens' son-in-law!); Jack Lindsay's heavily Freudian interpretation of *A Tale of Two Cities*, in *Life and Letters*, LXII (1949), 191-204; and Professor Franklin P. Rolfe's commentary on the Dickens letter he printed in *Nineteenth Century Fiction*, IV (1949), 243-44. This letter unquestionably shows that Dickens paid for the Italian musical education of Fanny Ternan, but one can agree with Mr. Rolfe that this proves that Dickens "supported" two Ternan girls only if prepared to maintain that all the hundreds of persons who have financed the study of young singers abroad during the last one hundred and fifty years must have had sexual relations with their sisters! Advices from London indicate that Mr. Lindsay is about to publish another "life" of Dickens in which he will discourse upon "The Great Lie" that Dickens led a decent life. Mr. Lindsay's quality as a scholar may be gauged from the paragraph in his *Life and Letters* article in which he makes a number of charges against Dickens, including the charge that "he was determined to end his marriage and seduce Ellen," and sums up as follows: "So much we know from his own statement!"

ens fell in love with Ellen in 1857; from that moment his wife's fate was sealed. Ellen did not love Dickens; indeed, "the thought of intimacy with him repelled her." But she "could, no doubt, especially when she was having a good time, play up to him so well that he was able to persuade himself of her love."

This survey of recent Dickensiana indicates that the picture of Dickens as an elderly lecher is in a fair way to be established in the public mind. It is time, then, to inquire as to the accuracy of the portrait.

II

First, as to Thomas Wright.

Canon William Benham, a Church of England cleric, who lived from 1831 to 1910, and who is admitted to have been a close friend of Ellen Ternan and her daughters, told Mr. Wright—that is to say, Mr. Wright told his readers that Canon Benham told him—that Ellen Ternan, having brooded through the years over her connection with Dickens until the memory had poisoned her life and she had come to loathe the very thought of her intimacy with the novelist in 1897 "disburdened her mind," confessed her sin, to Canon Benham.

That is all there is; there isn't any more.

Charles Dickens is dead. Ellen Ternan is dead. Canon Benham is dead. No one of these persons can now be interrogated or called in rebuttal. None can speak in behalf of the accused.

It was on this contemptible and flimsy basis that we were called upon in 1934-35 to asperse the memory of a Victorian lady during her children's lifetime and to revise our whole conception of the character of one of the greatest novelists who ever lived.

In the *Daily Express* article it was

suggested that Ellen Ternan had confessed to Canon Benham in his clerical capacity. Thomas Wright was a Plymouth Brother, and apparently it did not occur to him that he was here virtually suggesting that Canon Benham had violated the secrets of the confessional.

After his article had appeared, he was given to understand that Ellen Ternan, though herself the wife of a Church of England clergyman, was decidedly Protestant in her religious feelings; that, guilty or innocent, she would have been very unlikely to "confess" to a cleric. The confessional angle, accordingly, disappeared altogether when the story was repeated in book form.

When that eminent Dickensian, the late J. W. T. Ley, asked Mr. Wright why he had not sought corroborative evidence for so serious a charge, Mr. Wright replied with incredible naïveté that it had never occurred to him that anybody would doubt his word! Having been apprised that there were such unpleasantly suspicious persons in the world, Mr. Wright proceeded to gather "evidence." Having failed to get it printed in at least one London newspaper and one English literary weekly, he left it to be given to the world posthumously in his *Autobiography* (1936).

This time it is no English cleric whose testimony is presented.

Instead, it is an English servant woman, a Mrs. Martha Goldring, "who in her younger days had worked for Mr. Charles Dickens when he lived *sub rosa* at Linden Grove, Nunhead, S.E."

But it is still a case of What the Soldier Said:

Mrs. Goldring told the story to a later employer, Mrs. John Summerson. And Mrs. Summerson told her daughter. And Mrs. Summerson's daughter told Mr. Wright!

We have now entered the world of Gilbert and Sullivan. But let us go on.

The gentleman for whom Mrs. Goldring worked was known as Mr. Tringham, and he was engaged at the time in writing a mystery story. From another gentleman who lived in Linden Grove, Mr. Wright learned that Mr. Tringham's house had "special external sliding venetian shutters at the back," similar to those which Dickens used at Gad's Hill. This peeping Tom, moreover, was acquainted with a job-master who told him that "he had often driven Dickens and fetched him from and to Linden Grove." (So the very cabmen knew about it, yet we had to wait until 1934 for the shameful secret to leak out.) When Mr. Wright looked up the rate books, he found that the occupier of this house during the period under consideration was successively listed as "Frances Turnham," "Thomas Turnham," "Thomas Tringham," and "Charles Tringham." The house was vacated in July, 1870, the month after Dickens died.

Says Mr. Ley:

Now if this man "Turnham" and "Tringham" was Charles Dickens, then obviously Charles Dickens was not far short of a fool in his later years. First he allows Ellen Ternan to use her sister's christian name, and a surname perilously like her own in sound, then he varies his own alias three times in the course of a year, finally falls back on his own christian name! . . . And, mind you, this is Charles Dickens, the cleverest and most resourceful inventor of fictitious names of all England's novelists!⁶

But there is something else. There is plenty of the kind of evidence which satisfies those who cry for a cipher. For Dickens' last novels are crammed with Ellen. She is Estella in *Great Expectations*, and she is Bella in *Our Mutual Friend*, and she is Helena in *The Mystery*

of *Edwin Drood*. The names prove it! The names and the fact that Dickens never portrayed such girls as these before he knew Ellen. "I love money, and want money—want it dreadfully. I hate to be poor, offensively poor," says Bella. And, according to Mr. Wright, "Miss Ternan was grateful to Dickens for the notice he took of her, flattered by his fame and wealth, and pleased with the presents he gave her, but she did not love him." Pip (who is Dickens) loves the cold Estella in defiance of all reason and promise, but Estella marries Drummle (who apparently is Dickens also!) because Drummle is a man of means. Now when he comes to Lucie Manette, of *A Tale of Two Cities*, Wright is in serious trouble, for Lucie was neither mercenary nor pert. But—triumphant confirmation!—Lucie's lover, Charles Darnay, had the same initials as Charles Dickens. And when he reaches Helena Landless, Wright really regards his case as proved, for "Helena Landless" is obviously a variant of Ellen Lawless Ternan!⁷

Observe how dexterously the showman has persuaded the serpent to swallow its own tail: We do not know what Ellen Ternan's personality was like. So we assume that all Dickens' last heroines were studied from her. Then we create a composite portrait of Dickens' last heroines—though Lucie Manette, unaccountably stubborn for so gentle a girl, just will

⁷ Most of Mr. Wright's followers pursue the same line of argument with regard to these names, generally without giving him the dubious credit of having originated it. But Mr. Lindsay in his "Study" of *A Tale of Two Cities* goes much further. Dr. Manette, as Mr. Lindsay sees him, as Dickens, with the Bastille the symbol (if I read him aright) of Dickens' unhappy marriage. But Dickens is also both Carton and Darnay, so that he "gets the satisfaction of nobly giving up the girl and yet mating with her." What additional satisfaction he derived from also being her father (Dr. Manette) this master interpreter of literature does not pause to explain.

⁶ *The Dickensian*, XXXIII, 50.

not harmonize! and, lo, we emerge with a portrait of Ellen Ternan.

Mr. Pearson joins the brotherhood with his discovery that Bella Wilfer's character changes halfway through *Our Mutual Friend*. Upon this basis he reaches the slightly rash conclusion that it was "almost certainly in 1863" that Ellen first yielded to her elderly lover.

Dame Una Pope-Hennessy does not at any point really get down to a discussion of the problems involved in her interpretation of Dickens' life-experience. She does, however, permit herself one rather frivolous fling at those critics "who deny the validity [*sic*] of Dickens's liaison with Ellen Ternan, being themselves unable to reconcile it with their preconception of his character." When the biographer confronts ambiguous evidence, by what would Dame Una Pope-Hennessy have him guided if not by his previous knowledge of his subject's character, *as previously established by evidence which is not ambiguous?* What other guide is there?

Dame Una Pope-Hennessy declares further that Dickens was traveling in the company of Ellen Ternan at the time of the Staplehurst railway accident. To the best of my knowledge, this was first asserted in print by the actress Mrs. Thomas Whiffen, in a volume of reminiscences called *Keeping Off the Shelf*, published in 1928, when the author was nearly ninety. Mrs. Whiffen did not print Ellen's name; indeed, she referred to the girl in question, very inaccurately, as Dickens' god-daughter, but it is clear from the context that Ellen is the woman indicated. It should be understood that Mrs. Whiffen was not seeking to disparage Dickens; indeed, she goes out of her way to point out that among Dickens' neighbors "it was pretty generally conceded that Mrs. Dickens was needlessly jealous." The actress derived what she knew on the sub-

ject from her long-dead husband, in his youth a Rochester choirboy who had been acquainted with the novelist. Dickens' last-surviving son, Sir Henry Fielding Dickens, was still alive when Mrs. Whiffen's book appeared, and Sir Henry publicly and voluntarily declared that the statement that Ellen was in his father's company at Staplehurst, "I am certain is rubbish."⁸ Naturally, a biographer is at liberty to disagree with Sir Henry. But she has no right simply to ignore his statement. She has no right to repeat such a story without indicating the character of the evidence upon which it rests. Or if she possesses other evidence to substantiate the truth of her allegations, it then becomes her obligation to present that evidence.

Mr. Pearson, who also circulates the legend of Staplehurst, is equally sloppy in his methods. Whenever, after *The Frozen Deep*, Dickens refers to unhappiness or disappointment, Mr. Pearson assumes that he is speaking of his difficulties over Ellen Ternan. Thus, a week after the performance, Dickens wrote to Wilkie Collins: "We want something for *Household Words*, and I want to escape from myself. For when I *do* start up and stare myself seedily in the face, as happens to be my case at present, my blankness is inconceivable—indescribable—my misery amazing." This *may*, of course, be a reference to unhappy love. On the other hand, it may refer merely to Dickens' sense of letdown at getting back to everyday life after the excitement of play-producing. Mr. Pearson also quotes from the letters Dickens wrote Forster about his marital difficulties in September of the same year. *But he omits the passage* in which Dickens declares: "What is now befalling me I have seen steadily coming,

⁸ *Western Mail and South Wales News*, September 14, 1929.

ever since the days you remember when Mary was born. . . ." When Mary Dickens was born, Ellen Ternan had not yet been conceived!

As for the letter of July 5, 1866, to Mrs. Frances Eliot,⁹ also quoted by Mr. Pearson, nobody can prove that it refers to Ellen at all. If it does, it might well be used to argue Dickens' essential innocence in his relations with her; otherwise we have the novelist here taking the wife of a clergyman into his confidence concerning a sexual intrigue in which he is engaged.

III

But what is to be said, finally, of Mrs. Perugini's evidence? Must not the testimony of Dickens' own daughter be considered conclusive?

Hardly, in the form in which we have it. For the essential point about Mrs. Perugini's testimony is that we do not have Mrs. Perugini's testimony. Every statement about her father which Mrs. Perugini made *in propria persona* during her own lifetime was highly laudatory. Concerning what she told Miss Storey, we have only Miss Storey's report.¹⁰

⁹ *Letters* ("Nonesuch Dickens"), III, 475-76.

¹⁰ Legend says that Mrs. Perugini herself once wrote the story of her father and mother but destroyed it upon the advice of Mr. Bernard Shaw. Mr. Shaw's intimacy with Hesketh Pearson and other circumstances has sometimes led to the suspicion that his authority must be placed behind the scandalmongers. There is evidence, however, on the other side. In his Introduction to the edition of *Great Expectations* published in 1937 by the Limited Editions Club, Mr. Shaw disclaimed all knowledge of any amatory adventures of Dickens following his separation from his wife and conjectured that the "anti-Dickensites," in connection with whom he used the words "fanaticism" and "pathological," might well be expected to dig up something here. "It is not necessary to suggest a love affair," he declared, "for Dickens could get from a passing glance a hint which he could expand into a full-grown character."

This is not to say that we must choose between accepting Miss Storey's statements at face value and believing that Mrs. Perugini and/or Miss Storey deliberately lied about Dickens. There are at least two other possibilities:

1. Mrs. Perugini may have been mistaken about her father's relations with Miss Ternan, either because she was prejudiced in favor of her mother and against her father in the harrowing days which preceded the final separation between Dickens and his wife or because (as Mark Twain said of himself in his old age), when she approached the end of her long life, she remembered only the things that had never happened. It would be more charitable toward Mrs. Perugini to accept this hypothesis than to assume that all the statements she gave to the world concerning Dickens during her lifetime were deliberately insincere and that she wished at last to go on record as having desired to spit on her father's grave.

2. Miss Storey may have misunderstood Mrs. Perugini in such a manner as, after Mrs. Perugini's death in 1929, to have permitted herself to interpret what Mrs. Perugini had told her in the light of the scandal which had meanwhile been set going by Thomas Wright. Miss Storey writes very badly, and there is nothing in her book which would incline one to trust her judgment in the evaluation of evidence. (Be it remembered that her volume did not appear until a decade after Mrs. Perugini's death.) That Mrs. Perugini told Miss Storey something I make no question. But it need not necessarily have been just what Miss Storey recorded. Why, indeed, should Mrs. Perugini choose this girl—and this girl alone—to be her confidante in so delicate a matter? Why did she not take counsel of any of the members of her family, of any of the

authorities upon the life and work of Dickens who were well known to her?

If such reasoning does not seem entirely convincing, it should be pointed out that following the Wright-Storey line will not iron out all the difficulties in an admittedly complicated problem either. For example:

1. If Thomas Wright's report is to be trusted, we have Mrs. Ternan and the young Francesco Berger, who was not really Dickens' friend but a friend of his son, spending their evenings in an establishment where Mrs. Ternan's daughter was a "kept" woman. Is it likely that all these persons have been thus shameless about the matter? Or, if they had been, is it conceivable that we should have had to wait until 1934 for the secret to transpire?

2. Is it conceivable that, such being the situation, Dickens could have kept all relevant knowledge from his friends, or that, knowing the truth, they could have felt about him as they did? Carlyle speaks of "the good, the gentle, kind-hearted, ever friendly, noble Dickens; every inch of him an honest man." Marcus Stone says: "Charles Dickens was the best man I have ever known. He was so good that you put his greatness into second place when you knew him." Most difficult of all, on the hypothesis of guilt, is the testimony of Tom Trollope: "He was the largest-hearted man I ever knew. I think he made a nearer approach to the divine precept, love thy neighbor as thyself, than one man in a hundred thousand. Dickens hated a mean action or a mean sentiment as one hates something that is physically loathsome to the sight or touch."

*Tom Trollope was the husband of Fanny Ternan. If the Wright-Storey hypothesis is correct, then Tom Trollope is praising the man who seduced his young sister-in-law!*¹¹

3. If life at Gad's Hill was "hell" after Mrs. Dickens' departure, why do none of Dickens' other children seem to have been aware of it? It may be worth remembering that Mrs. Perugini once said of herself: "I wish I had never been born. I am glad now that my little boy did not live, for he would probably have inherited all my faults."

4. If Ellen Ternan's life was spoiled by her association with Dickens to such an extent that she spent her later years a prey to remorse and finally confessed her "sin" to Canon Benham, then she must have been a far greater actress off the stage than she ever was on it. She was married in 1878 to the Reverend George Wharton Robinson. Her daughter has no recollection of having been reared by a Lady Dedlock. She cherished her memories of her great friend, spoke of him freely and unconstrainedly, and brought up her children to revere his name. She was on terms of intimate friendship with Mamie Dickens and Georgina Hogarth. After the publication of the Wright book, the surviving sisters of Ellen Ternan's old servant and companion and later children's nurse sent this message to Ellen Ternan's daughter: "Our sister more than once said to us, 'Tell ———, if she ever asks, that I never mentioned the matter to her because it could only cause her pain, but that if she had asked me, I should have been able to say solemnly that her dear mother never was the mistress of Charles Dickens.'"

5. If Ellen Ternan had been Dickens' mistress, would he have openly mentioned her name in his will? Would he not have been more likely to provide for her *sub rosa*? A thousand pounds was a pleasant legacy to leave to a young friend,

¹¹ Mr. Rolfe (*op. cit.*) suggests that Dickens kept the facts from Tom Trollope, but it is difficult to believe that this could have been achieved.

but it would not be much, surely, for a woman who had given him a dozen years of her youth. By the same token, would Forster have printed the will in his authorized biography of the novelist, with the knowledge and consent of the Dickens family, if all the persons involved knew that the very first name mentioned in it was that of the dead man's paramour?

6. By English law, the birth of an illegitimate child must be registered, under pain of severe penalties, in the mother's name. The registers at Somerset House for the period under consideration have been searched, but no entry has been found. Would Dickens and Ellen Ternan have dared to disregard the law?

IV

Let the readers of this paper understand the author clearly. The writer has no intention of entering into any special pleading in behalf of Charles Dickens. Whether, the story of the alleged liaison being true, it "ought" to be given to the world does not concern me here. Neither will I consent to be sidetracked into any consideration of the validity or nonvalidity of "conventional" moral standards. As to whether, the circumstances being what they were, Charles Dickens would have been "justified" in forming a connection with Ellen Ternan or anybody else, I deliberately refrain from expressing an opinion.

Primarily, indeed, I am not concerned with Charles Dickens or yet with Ellen Ternan. I am concerned about the responsible use of evidence in criticism and biography. Human character is so unbelievably involved a thing that, even in the face of all the considerations I have urged on the other side, nobody can declare unequivocally that it is impossible that Dickens should have done just what his detractors say that he did do. *The*

point of the matter is that nobody has ever proved it and that, in spite of this fact, contemporary writers are taking it for granted that he was guilty and are saying so in their accounts of his life. Dickens has been dead since 1870. Ellen Ternan died in 1914. If there is any accounting in the universe for what human beings do upon this earth, both have presumably by now been judged by an even higher wisdom than either Hesketh Pearson's or Somerset Maugham's. And if they still know what is going on upon this sorry planet, we may hope that they will by now have acquired sufficient detachment from human passions and judgments—and sufficient charity—not to be unduly agitated by what may be written about them by persons whose appetite for a literary sensation is stronger than their fundamental human decency. In their behalf, then, one need enter no plea. But for the sake of us who are still in the flesh, and in order that we may exercise the good of the understanding, it is important that critical irresponsibility should be challenged.

For the most discouraging thing about the Dickens scandal is not that it should have been set forth. The only untouched reputations upon this earth belong to persons who were never important enough to make it worth while for their contemporaries to lie about them. The most discouraging thing is the easygoing way in which the story is being permitted to worm its way into general acceptance.¹² J. W. T. Ley, to be sure, continued to fight valiantly for Dickens' good name

¹² It is also, of course, being taken for granted by persons not capable of making an examination of the evidence. See *Theatre Arts*, XXXIII (June, 1949), 14, for a devastating review of a literary abortion called *The Ivy Green*, by one Mervyn Nelson, which ran through a brief and inglorious career on the stage of Boston and New York in the spring of 1949. But cf. Sydney Harris' venomous and absurdly uninformed commentary on this play in the *Chicago Daily News*, April 22, 1949.

to the day of his death, and the present editor of *The Dickensian*, Mr. Leslie C. Staples, valiantly carries on the fight. Alexander Woolcott roundly declared that Edmund Wilson's essay was not a critical study but an uncritical study. Dickens' granddaughter, Monica Dickens, the novelist, has restrainedly pointed out that no one has ever proved that anything more than friendship ever existed between Dickens and Ellen Ternan.¹³ I have said my say in re-

¹³ Cf. *Life*, XXV (December 27, 1948), 81.

views of several books. Others have spoken also from time to time. But that is not enough. Faint and far away, I hear the echo of a faded voice, but I cannot clearly understand what it is saying. I fancy I catch the words "lately whispered rumors" and "abominably false," and there seems to be something also about somebody who would "lie as wilfully and foully as it is possible for any false witness to lie, between heaven and earth." But I have no idea to whom these harsh words are intended to apply.

The Struggle between Good and Evil in the First Book of "The Faerie Queene"

LYLE GLAZIER¹

THE first book of *The Faerie Queene* is an example of *psychomachia*, or the struggle between good and evil for possession of the soul. In this struggle the soul itself is not passive but is capable of making choices and hence deserving of reward and punishment, as a Christian protagonist must be.

There are many examples in the moral allegories of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance of such *psychomachia*. In the morality play *Everyman*, the hero represents the soul of any man about to die. It is tugged by worldly desires toward hell and tugged by heavenly influences toward heaven. Everyman, an active participant in the struggle, makes the right renunciations, and the play ends in spiritual victory in spite of the temporary triumph of death. Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* is built around the same kind of struggle. Although Faustus sold his soul to the devil in exchange for intellectual insight

and worldly power, never until the end of the play does his good angel give up hope that he will repent and be redeemed. Even Mephistophilis is at times enlisted among the forces of good. That Faustus is an active contender is shown by his cry of remorse in Act V, when he realizes that there is no longer any hope for his salvation. Milton's *Paradise Lost* sets forth the same struggle in the conventional imagery of the Christian church. Evil is Satan and his infernal crew. Good is God, Christ, and the angels of light. The human soul is Adam and Eve. Once more, the protagonists are the agents of their own downfall, and they suffer the remorse of the righteously punished. In *Paradise Regained*, a similar struggle is given in the scenes where Satan unsuccessfully tempts Christ with much the same seductions as those Faustus fell victim to. Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* combines the theme of *psychomachia* with the theme of a soul-journey or a pilgrimage of

¹ University of Buffalo.

the soul in search of moral perfection, just as *The Faerie Queene* does. On the journey Christian is exposed to the blandishments of evil and the ministrations of good. He is vulnerable, as any foster-child of John Calvin would have had to be, and his spiritual victory brings with it the well-merited reward of eternal life.

In *The Faerie Queene*, Book I, instead of a struggle for possession of the soul, we have a struggle for possession of only one quality of the soul—holiness. In other books of *The Faerie Queene*, other soul-qualities achieve their perfection, and the qualities of the first twelve books (had they been completed), added together, would have made up the ideal soul of a Renaissance gentleman. In Book I, Spenser's image for holiness is the Red Cross Knight, who is acted upon by many other images representing forces of good or forces of evil and who—like Everyman, like Faustus, like Adam and Eve, like the Christ of *Paradise Regained*, and like Christian—in turn reacts upon those images and in the end achieves his own destiny as a free agent.

At the beginning of the book, the Red Cross Knight represents not holiness already acquired but the devout soul bent upon the pursuit of holiness. He is undisciplined and "clownish," capable of making mistakes. Our interest is thus alive. Will he succeed, or will he not? There would be little dramatic interest in watching a pure, impregnable soul while it was exposed to errors to which it could not possibly yield. Throughout the twelve cantos of Book I, the striving soul is human and vulnerable. For example, in Canto I when the knight travels into the forest ("the wandering wood"), he demonstrates that he is being tempted from the clear and open path of virtue. When he encounters the monster

Error, the temptation has become more than a mere titillation of his fancy—it has become actual—and there is danger that he will not be strong enough to withstand it. Later, after an exercise of courageous self-control, objectified by the slaying of Error, he is momentarily secure. But he quickly falls into danger again, this time a more subtle form of error, represented by the Machiavellian Archimago, who, like Satan in *Paradise Lost*, represents perhaps the shrewd self-seductions of a sinful imagination. At Archimago's hermitage, sin takes more specific shape than at the Den of Error; Archimago fashions a lascivious dream, and the striving soul is tempted to indulge its imagined dreams of lust.

But no matter how specific some of the temptations of Book I are, Spenser's method is to deal with universals and not with particulars. The Red Cross Knight is not simply a soul striving for holiness, he is *the* striving soul, a representation of the earnest Christian soul wherever it can be found, just as Everyman and Adam and Eve are representations of all men and women. The wandering wood represents not a specific temptation but temptation itself, wherever found and in whatever form. Error represents not a specific exposure to sin but any exposure to sin: we have here Error, not an error. Archimago is hypocritical self-indulgence in any form, any of the thousands of forms met with among men—all the instances of wishful thinking, all the instances of substituting false reasons for the real reasons which motivate us to sinful acts. It happens that in Archimago's cell the sinful act to which Holiness is tempted is an act of lust. But, as usual, Spenser is representing not a specific case but a general tendency in human-kind. For Archimago, lust is only the present expedient; he makes use of the

occasion at hand. He himself is lying hypocrisy or rationalization, and he would welcome any occasion to win the soul from integrity, any shrewd occasion for putting into the mind false reasons which can make the departure from right conduct more alluring.

It is this quality of Spenser's characters—their general, rather than their specific, representations—that makes his allegory at first difficult for the twentieth-century mind to grasp. We have no trouble understanding error in specific instances. When Macbeth and Lady Macbeth plot the death of Duncan, we understand perfectly well that they are walking deeper and deeper into the wandering wood. When the murder is carried out, we understand that they have lost the battle between their consciences and Error. Macbeth's soul inhabited a Christian world and had firmly planted in it the moral principle which led him to believe in the importance of moral perfection. Hence he tried to push temptation away; but, when his wife became temptation, or Error, personified, the opposition was too great, and he gave in. Because he was at heart Christian, from that time on he was torn apart by remorse. On the same journey as that being taken by the Red Cross Knight, he had lost his battle with Error and was forevermore a lost soul. Take another instance. When Mrs. Frankford in Thomas Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness* yields to the importunities of Mosbie, her husband's best friend, and makes a cuckold of her husband, we have no trouble understanding that she has yielded to hypocritical arguments which express her own secret inclinations. And we realize that she has lost her battle for moral perfection. Her *psychomachia*, like Macbeth's, has ended in defeat. Both these stories are understandable to us because

they are case histories—examples representing widespread human vices.

But Spenser is not concerned with providing us with case histories. He is trying to present us with the graph of Virtue and Vice. However, he would not be representing Virtue and Vice if he gave us only an abstract proposition; for both Virtue and Vice, when they operate, operate powerfully upon the human emotions. Therefore, Spenser must find images to represent his universal, but not abstract, qualities—images which will affect us with ennobling exultation in the presence of Virtue or with repellent horror in the presence of Vice.

His technique is, in a sense, antithetical to Shakespeare's. Shakespeare begins by drawing human beings as they move and live in a complex world. Not infrequently one of these characters becomes refined until it takes on almost symbolical meaning. Iago, for example, becomes almost a symbol for envenomed jealousy. Juliet becomes girlhood in the first flush of pure love. Falstaff, to Dover Wilson, becomes an incarnation of the Seven Deadly Sins. But all these characters begin as individuals. It is only as the play develops that a generalized type emerges. This generalization is the result of hammering away at a particular quality exhibited in many circumstances by the same character. Iago is nearly always venomous. Falstaff usually yields to temptation. That they sometimes break out of the pattern shows that Shakespeare was a close student of life, where no pure types exist.

Spenser, on the other hand, begins with the universal quality in mind and searches for an image to represent it. His images usually do not become individuals. The description of Una in stanza 4 of the first canto is the description of a symbol rather than of a living girl:

A lovely Ladie rode him faire beside,
Upon a lowly Asse more white then snow,
Yet she much whiter. . . .

To take that as realistic description would be too painful for the imagination. If we met her in the flesh, Una's more-than-snow-white pallor would have us rushing her off to a sanatorium. But she is not supposed to be a flesh-and-blood girl. She is just enough girl so that the narrative can make use of her. But more important is her meaning as Truth, too radiant for the human sight. Error, too, is not realistic:

And as she lay upon the durty ground,
Her huge long taile her den all overspred,
Yet was in knots and many boughtes upwound,
Pointed with mortall sting. Of her there bred
A thousand yong ones, which she dayly fed,
Sucking upon her poisonous dugs, each-one
Of sundry shapes, yet all ill favored:
Soone as that uncouth light upon them shone,
Into her mouth they crept, and suddain all
were gone.

That is simply an accumulated monstrosity to arouse in us an Olympian disgust. Archimago, also in Canto I, is an objective correlative for deceit; as always with hypocrisy, his real viciousness is concealed behind a pleasing front:

Sober he semde, and very sagely sad,
And to the ground his eyes were lowly bent,
Simple in shew, and boyde of malice bad,
And all the way he prayed, as he went,
And often knockt his brest, as one that did
repent.

The words governing that description are *semde*, *shew*, and *as one that did repent*, all emphasizing Archimago's intent to deceive. Gradually the hypocrite is revealed—he "well could file his tongue as smooth as glas"—until the "bold, bad man" is openly displayed. Unlike Iago, who sometimes almost has a heart, Archimago is never human, except for the sake of luring someone into

his power. He is Hypocrisy, and he is meant to—and does, if we read Spenser imaginatively—arouse in us the same emotional discomfort that hypocritical actions arouse in us under whatever circumstances we discover them. The "little lowly Hermitage" likewise has a pleasant exterior, and at first its interior is simple and unostentatious; but after the guests go to sleep, an unsuspected study suddenly opens up for Archimago to retire into, and the little house spreads out, full of mysterious corridors and "secret parts" for vice to exploit.

The entire episode of Holiness' first meeting with Archimago, like an episode in a stream-of-consciousness novel, is an externalizing of progressive states of mind. Where the stream-of-consciousness novel gives us an extended soliloquy or uttered thought-stream, Book I of *The Faerie Queene* often gives us an oblique narrative, which can be interpreted in terms of an unfolding of the inner consciousness. Neither method is realistic. That of *The Faerie Queene*, because the superficial narrative has meaning in itself, is more deceptive and probably demands more alertness on the part of the modern reader, though doubtless a medieval reader, brought up on such works as *Le Roman de la rose*, could have understood instinctively the double plane of action in *The Faerie Queene*.

It is Spenser's aim not only to find the proper symbols for Hypocrisy but to externalize the whole experience of falling a victim to hypocrisy. On the narrative level we have the unsuspecting first steps, the gradual dawning of suspicion, and, finally, the frantic escape from the snare. However, Spenser is not simply describing Holiness' coming under the influence of a strategist, as Desdemona and Othello come under the influence of Iago. That is only the obvious, narrative level of the

Hermitage episode. Underlying 'that is the psychological narrative, in which is depicted Holiness' falling victim to his own inclination toward hypocrisy. The dream is an externalizing of his inclination toward lust. His shock on awakening and confronting the dream and his sending it away are realistic evidence that his conscience has been outraged by his own capacity for evil and that he has resolved to have no more traffic with his sinful imagination. His discovery of the false Una and the fabricated fop is an externalizing of his attempt to rationalize his way out of his moral dilemma, to persuade himself that, after all, Una is the libertine—it surely cannot be he! By now he has become completely hypocritical, a hollow mask of holiness, stubbornly insisting that the mask is the genuine thing. When he flees from the Hermitage, leaving Una in Archimago's power, it is not as if Desdemona had fled from Iago. Rather, it is a sign that Holiness has finally succumbed to Archimago's wiles; his surrender is dramatized in the long interlude with Duessa, who is—so far as the moral allegory is concerned—simply a feminine counterpart of Archimago. Not even Fradubio's plain warning is enough to undeceive Holiness, who has fled from Truth, not from Hypocrisy. From his flight result all his misfortunes of the succeeding cantos—not only his falling dangerously under the spell of Duessa but also his exposure to Pride, his imprisonment by Orgoglio, and finally his brief surrender to Despair.

To try to fit every detail in the complex machinery of *The Faerie Queene* into such a psychological pattern would be impossible. Sometimes the poem seems to move on the simple narrative level, as in the episode dealing with Una's life among the people of the wood. Sometimes it

seems to move also on the level of psychological revelation; this is true, in general, of those episodes in which Holiness has a leading part.

But in both kinds of narrative, external and internal, there is the struggle between Good and Evil, filtered through all parts of the poem, until we begin to feel that it is not only a struggle for mastery over Holiness but a struggle for mastery over the world. This dualism is most clearly evidenced in the imagery, which in *The Faerie Queene*, where nearly every character and nearly every incident are metaphors, means nearly every item of description in the poem. C. S. Lewis, in *The Allegory of Love*, points out the extent of such imagistic dualism: "Like Life and Death, or Light and Darkness, the opposition of natural and artificial, naïve and sophisticated, genuine and spurious, meets us at every turn."

To illustrate Mr. Lewis' point, we can set up still another pair of opposites and examine the way Health as a good and Disease as an evil are balanced against each other throughout the book. Each of the champions of virtue—Holiness, Satyrane, and Arthur—is vigorous in body, and Holiness' decline in faith is accompanied by a decline in physical strength. That Spenser intended Holiness to be no bloodless stick is shown by the energy with which he encounters paynim and dragon: "The Knight was fiers, and full of youthly heat," Spenser exclaims in the midst of the description of the fight against Sansjoy. Satyrane is another example of bodily energy: educated in the bloody gymnasium of the forest, he grew so powerful that "his might was never overthrowne." Arthur, in his turn, although he had to depend upon the miracle of his diamond shield

to vanquish Orgoglio, was so strong that, when he arrived at the dungeon in which Holiness was confined, he "rent that yron dore." Error is a grotesque monstrosity of creeping slime and leprosy. Duessa's real self—the type of senile decay—is revealed in the speech of Fradubio and again in the scene where she is unmasked after Arthur's victory over her seven-headed beast. The Red Cross Knight, after his confinement in Orgoglio's dungeon, is himself the symbol of decay; his yielding to the Evil, Pride, is dramatized by the disease which wracks him and reduces him to a fit subject for the temptations of Despair. It is only after his spiritual revival in the House of Holiness that his health is restored, as a sign that he is morally ready to continue the battle against Evil, this time represented by the dragon of Canto XI.

These are only a few illustrations of Spenser's aim—to find symbols for arousing in us the same emotions that are aroused when we meet specific acts of moral heroism, of craven retreat, or of guilty self-indulgence and, by the dramatic conflict between these symbols, to inculcate love of virtue not by preaching but, following the advice of Sidney, by giving examples: "... and with a tale, forsooth, he cometh unto you, with a tale which holdeth children from play and old men from the chimney-corner; and doth intend the winning of the mind from wickedness to virtue; even as the child is often brought to take most wholesome things by hiding them in such other as have a pleasant taste. . . ." Spenser is thus a Christian teacher, whose purpose it is to work upon us at the emotional level where we are most vulnerable, leaving us attracted toward Good and repelled from Evil, wherever they appear in his

stanzas, and providing us with a protective armor to ward off the temptations of life.

The Faerie Queene and other works dealing with the struggle of the soul to achieve moral perfection are almost bound to seem anachronistic to twentieth-century students, who consider moral perfection no longer possible or even important. *The Faerie Queene* and all psychomachies could have been written only by authors who believed in the possibility of sin. Occasionally our age produces such a writer—James Joyce, for example—but he has to face not only his obsession with guilt but his knowledge that he lives at a time which has condemned such guilt feelings as obsolete. A belief in sin is no longer regarded as normal; it is a disease, and sufferers from it, we think, should be turned over to the psychiatrist for observation and cure. Our age is rather one of apologists for sin, who praise the divided judgment—condemn the member of society but forgive the man. Our creed—"If you know all, you can forgive all"—holds no one responsible at heart. Nor is there any final reward or punishment. There cannot be, for the individual is not finally responsible; society, nature, circumstance, chance—these are the guilty parties. We may pay lip service to freedom of the will, but to accept it as a fact would require too great a sacrifice of another kind of freedom—our freedom to do as we please (or as we must), without fear of eternal damnation. Spenser and Milton did not write within such frames of reference. They were Christians as few people are today. Without their belief in sin, the Red Cross Knight explodes into vapor, along with Adam and Eve and Christian and the Christ of *Paradise Regained* and the New Testament.

The Writing Clinic and the Writing Laboratory

ROBERT H. MOORE¹

WRITING clinics and writing laboratories are becoming increasingly popular among American universities and colleges as remedial agencies for removing students' deficiencies in composition. A recent survey of one hundred and twenty leading universities and colleges throughout the country was made at the time that a clinic was established at the University of Illinois, to determine the incidence, methods, and effectiveness of such agencies. It procured fifty-five replies, forty-nine of them indicating in some detail the nature of the remedial measures being pursued. Of these forty-nine institutions, twenty-four now make use of writing clinics or laboratories of one sort or another, and eleven others are contemplating their establishment. In other words, 70 per cent of the colleges indicating the nature of their remedial work either now use or are considering using the clinic or laboratory in the solving of students' writing difficulties. And, even if it be assumed that none of the other seventy-five institutions are interested in the device, there remain at least 20 per cent of the colleges selected for the survey which are using the method, and an additional 10 per cent considering its adoption.

The survey was primarily concerned with the clinic and the laboratory rather than with remedial measures in gen-

eral, so that it is not always possible to determine from the data assembled how much of the remedial burden in a given college is shared with such other devices as the precollege-level course, the segregating of poorly prepared freshmen into special sections of the regular elementary composition course, the upper-class remedial course, the specialized course in technical writing, the graduation proficiency examination, or individual tutoring.² The University of Illinois, for example, uses the clinic to supplement all the above devices except the segregation of freshmen into special sections of the regular course. Yet it can be said that the two devices are sufficiently successful to enable thirteen universities to depend on the clinic or the laboratory for all remedial work; and at least one, the University of Miami, uses the laboratory method exclusively in its elementary composition program.

The techniques of the clinic and of the laboratory are, of course, far more widespread than are formally established agencies. The clinic is primarily concerned with the diagnosis of the individual student's writing difficulties and the suggestion of remedial measures that might profitably be pur-

² Remedial reading, a related problem, is most often handled by a separate agency, frequently under the guidance of trained psychologists rather than of English teachers.

¹ University of Illinois.

sued. Such diagnosis and prescription are an early concern, as well, of the class instructor in conference, the counselor in a university tutoring bureau, the individually procured tutor, and the instructor in the laboratory. The laboratory, in turn, is primarily concerned with the direct and continuing supervision of the remedial efforts of the individual student, and such supervision, in greater or less degree, must also be given by the class instructor, the tutor, and the clinician. The advantages of the formally established agency, then, lie less in its possession of esoteric methods than in its ready accessibility, its concentration on the removal of specific deficiencies, and its development of instructors particularly skilled in remedial procedures.

As the methods of the clinic and the laboratory overlap, so does the terminology. As the names imply, the clinic is chiefly concerned with suggesting measures for self-help, the laboratory with work done directly under the guidance of an instructor; but in practice the terms are almost interchangeable, "laboratory" being the more common and the laboratory approach being more often used, particularly in those schools depending on such agencies for the bulk of their remedial efforts. For convenience in discussing operating procedures, however, I shall draw theoretical distinctions between the two, with the final reminder that only the initial emphasis on one approach or the other serves, in the last analysis, to distinguish the relationship between the individual student and the clinic or the laboratory to which he turns for help.

The writing clinic customarily supplements other remedial devices, such as the compulsory upper-class remedial

course for students whose writing proficiency is deemed inadequate to meet standards prescribed for graduation. Consultation with the clinic, consequently, is likely to be voluntary and to spring from a student's own realization—often reinforced by a dean's or an instructor's comments—that his writing skill is less satisfactory than it should be and is handicapping him in the writing of examinations, term papers, and reports. Occasionally, compulsion is involved, most frequently through the device of withholding credit for a course in which writing deficiencies have been noted; but usually the clinic is an agency to which the student himself as an individual applies for help in removing a deficiency of which he is personally aware.

As a result, the problem of diagnosis is often not difficult. A preliminary interview may in itself disclose the basic weakness, particularly with upperclassmen or graduate students who have had a good deal of experience with college writing problems. If the problem is one of spelling or punctuation, for example, the student himself can easily identify it. More frequent, however, and more baffling to the student are weaknesses in the organization and development of papers or examination answers or the tendency to write vague, telescoped, or garbled sentences rather than concise and specific ones. The student with such deficiencies usually knows only that his writing somehow does not say what he thinks it does. But, even with these more complex problems, the experience of the clinician can often enable him to uncover the basic difficulty through an interview alone.

If the preliminary interview does not expose the difficulty, various other means may be employed. If the student

has suddenly been impelled to seek assistance because a returned examination or term paper was less successful than he had anticipated, he is likely to have brought the paper with him, particularly if his impulse has been reinforced by tart comments from his instructor. If he has not brought it with him at first, he usually has it at home, perhaps with several others like it, and can produce it for analysis. The most successful diagnosis, probably, is that which results from an analysis, with the student, of specimens of the writing that he has actually done in his classes. And, incidentally, the student can be made aware of the direct connection between writing deficiency and unsatisfactory grades and so takes the first remedial step in the midst of the process of diagnosis itself.

If specimens of his classroom writing are not available—if his consultation, for example, has sprung from a recommendation by a dean concerned with his general academic record—at least two other diagnostic measures may be used, neither wholly satisfactory. One is the analysis of a paper written for the purpose, the other is the interpretation of a diagnostic test or tests. The disadvantages of the first are threefold: it is difficult to find subjects not too remote from the classroom subjects, it is impossible to reproduce the classroom conditions, and (a point to which I shall return) it is impossible for the student to write *as he usually writes when he is not thinking primarily of the quality of his English*; the writing which he produces to order for analysis, consequently, is not his normal writing, whether for better or for worse. The disadvantage of the diagnostic test lies in its basic artificiality: no test of which I am aware is more than indicative of

probable deficiencies, so that reasonably certain diagnosis must still await analysis of actual writing, preferably that produced for a classroom situation.

Diagnosis having been made, by one or several of these means, the remedial measures to be followed must be outlined. The more intelligent and eager the student, of course, the easier it is to discover the difficulty in the first place and to determine means to enable him to remove it. The clinic is not, as a rule, concerned with the direct supervision of remedial efforts, with providing extensive tutoring; it is therefore most satisfactory as a supplement to a wider remedial program, since only the intelligent and eager student can be wholly successful in applying even the best self-help measures. Here, as elsewhere, the more resourceful the clinician is in suggesting new approaches to old problems, the more quickly does self-help become effective help. A student who is deficient in many ways may be urged, and in some institutions required, to enrol in remedial classes or to seek private tutoring. Where the clinic is a supplementary agency in a balanced remedial program, the students with numerous and glaring deficiencies will usually have been caught elsewhere in the remedial net. The students who consult the clinic are, as a result, troubled by specific and limited weaknesses, and remedial efforts can be concentrated on those.

Students exhibiting weaknesses in the handling of purely mechanical problems can be referred to specialized study groups, if they are provided, or can be urged to secure private tutoring directed toward removing the specific deficiencies involved, or can be made aware of the existence of numerous specialized remedial texts dealing particularly with

their problems. In the last connection it might be remarked that a single publisher provides a convenient, inexpensive, and, on the whole, admirable series of remedial pamphlets, of whose existence most students are completely unaware. In the handling of spelling problems, for example, the appropriate pamphlet in that series offers the best presentation with which I am familiar of the very complex procedures necessary for the removal of spelling difficulty. Spelling classes following the same procedures, however, are superior, since it requires intense ambition on the part of the student to persist in the work on his own. Frequently, of course, the clinician can himself supplement these formal aids with teaching devices suggested by his own experience and the circumstances arising during specific interviews and, wherever possible, will do so. Conscientious work by the student with such materials and periodic visits to the clinic for assistance and for checks on progress will usually result in the removal of the mechanical difficulty. It depends on how willing the student is to make the effort.

Problems in the organization and development of material are more complex but, with intelligent students, are more quickly removed. Frequently, little more is necessary than a demonstration of the technique of phrasing a thesis and constructing a scratch outline which permits winnowing and rearranging ideas. Practice at such preliminary planning of subject matter, with clinical analysis of of the resulting writing (writing, preferably, which is directly related to his college courses) can do wonders for the student who somehow—usually because of youthful indifference—never realized that the same techniques, when they were presented in his elementary com-

position courses, would someday be of personal use to him.

Similar writing practice, with emphasis on specific diction, concise phrasing and the necessity for revisional rereading of *what was actually written*, not what was merely intended, can be of nearly equal assistance to the student who, in the haste of writing examinations or belated papers, produces vague, telescoped, or garbled sentences. It must, however, be pointed out that such writing often accompanies garbled information or habitually confused thinking. Psychological clinics can sometimes be called on for assistance in the latter event. The same psychological clinics are frequently equipped to assist in removing writing difficulties which stem from reading deficiencies³ or from complex personality disorders. They lie, properly, outside the province of the writing clinic.

The writing clinic works with the individual student. The writing laboratory on the other hand, is far more likely to work with the individual as a member of a group, usually a group with varying problems. It is more economical than the clinic, in that one instructor in a given hour can work with ten or twenty students where the clinician can scarcely work with more than four at most. Further, the laboratory can more successfully be used as the sole remedial agency, if the institution is willing to provide only one. It is less likely, however, to uncover individual difficulties as rapidly as the clinic does or to avoid wasting the student's time on material that he does not need. And it adds the actual tutoring of students to the costs of the remedial program. Only by con-

³ Only a few English clinics deal to any great extent with remedial reading problems.

sidering the remedial needs of a particular student body can a final choice be made between the two types of agency on grounds of economy.

Customarily, many or all of the students coming to the writing laboratory attend—often willingly, of course—under compulsion, as the result of failure in proficiency examinations or of faculty referral, the latter being frequently accompanied by the withholding of course credit pending the removal of deficiencies. Most laboratories, however, are also open to students voluntarily seeking assistance. With the laboratory, as with the clinic and all other remedial devices, satisfactory results are most readily secured when the student, whatever the means of his coming, is personally convinced of the desirability of improving his writing skill.

Initial diagnosis in the laboratory is more likely than in the clinic to depend upon available tests or on the student's own analysis of his weaknesses. However, some laboratories do also use analysis by the instructor of specimens of the student's writing—of term papers, examinations, or "themes" produced for the purpose. The most successful laboratories, like the clinics, attempt to individualize the work throughout, which, of course, increases the cost and the complexity of the program as it increases its effectiveness.

The remedial treatment used in the laboratory varies widely. Frequently, an entire group is put through the same review course, with roving instructors constantly available to answer questions, advise on organizational problems, and check on progress. Less often, particularly in laboratories to which students may come at any time and leave at will, personal files are kept to record the difficulties and progress of each stu-

dent, and the instructor turns from each problem to the next as it arises. Least often of all, students with similar problems are segregated in small groups, or students may even be handled individually, particularly in the early stages. Both the last two types of treatment can readily concentrate instruction on specifically defined needs.

Following diagnosis of the student's needs—and those needs are usually fairly clear cut and limited in kind—remedial measures are prescribed. Workbooks or handbooks are often used for preliminary review,⁴ the work with them being done in the laboratory, with the instructor available for consultation or, if the entire group is struggling with the same problem, for group explanation and discussion. As soon as the student convinces the instructor that the basic principles are clear, he is put to practicing the kind of writing with which he has trouble, whether he writes "themes" to assigned or self-suggested topics, expositions of subject matter drawn from his other courses, sample answers to examination questions, or the actual papers assigned in his other courses. During all this work the laboratory instructor and the laboratory dictionaries, handbooks, and other reference books are there for the student to consult when his own resources are unable to carry him further. As problems arise, the instructor makes use of all the teaching devices at his command to clarify the basic principles involved and to stimulate the student to apply them in his own practice. The laboratory is a highly successful remedial device for those students who are willing to make intelligent use of the assistance provided.

⁴Those who use workbooks, it might be remarked, are at least balanced by those who object to them violently.

Most institutions employing the laboratory method send at least some of the students to it under compulsion. The machinery for releasing them from that compulsion is usually of one of two kinds: either a formal proficiency examination, set by the laboratory instructors in the laboratory or by a separate testing agency, must be passed, or the instructors must certify from the work the student has done that he has demonstrated that he has become capable of writing satisfactorily. (Only rarely, it might be remarked parenthetically, is the examination, if there is one, purely of the objective type.) Students who come to the laboratory voluntarily are, as a rule, allowed to stop coming whenever they themselves feel that they have attained a satisfactory degree of skill.

Except for students working in the laboratory as a regular, assigned part of their composition courses, credit is customarily not given for either laboratory or clinical work.

A very few universities charge the students fees—ranging from five dollars for two quarters to two dollars and a half an hour—for the service. Most of them offer the service without charge, accepting the handling of remedial composition problems as a necessary, if deplorable, part of the task of American colleges and universities. The expense of the agency is usually borne by the English department, perhaps on the ground that it will be blamed anyway—surely unjustly—for all student lapses in English in other courses throughout the university and that it might better protect itself by being able to point to the remedial agencies which it provides. Occasionally the expense is borne by the university itself, as an administrative rather than a teaching expense.

Clinic and laboratory staffs are likely to be self-made. Customarily they are ex-

perienced members of the English department who are particularly interested in remedial composition, though much of the direct tutoring in the laboratories is provided by graduate assistants, who are, of course, often themselves experienced instructors. Only rarely do members of the staff devote full time to the work, though the equivalent of several full-time instructors is provided for the larger laboratories.

As with all remedial measures, much of the enduring success of the work of the clinic or the laboratory depends on members of faculties outside the English department. The complaint is nationwide that members of other departments carp bitterly to their colleagues in English about the quality of student writing but can only with difficulty be persuaded to point out to the students themselves that clear and effective writing is important. Three universities report having tried the clinic or the laboratory and then having abandoned it because too few students came or were sent to it.⁵ The students' indifference to the quality of their writing springs inevitably from faculty indifference to it, even though that faculty indifference may be more apparent than real. In his writing, as in much else, the student will do no more than he has to. I remarked earlier on the difference that often exists between the quality of the writing which a student can produce when he is aware that his writing skill is to be considered and that of his habitual writing. If instructors in non-English courses would insist on the best writing of which the student is capable, they would find—amid much student grumbling—that the English departments have builded better than is often supposed.

⁵ A fourth institution abandoned its clinic when the director moved from the English department to the school of education.

Variety in Sentence Structure: A Device

DON M. WOLFE¹

IN THE achievement of sentence variety in student papers, no device is more effective than the sentence graph: a graph by which the student is required to analyze and compare the variety of grammatical openings and the varied length of his sentences. In a theme of twenty sentences, when there is no insistence on structural variety, twelve to fifteen are likely to open with subjects, two or three with prepositional phrases, one or two with adverbs, perhaps one with an introductory adverbial clause. Seldom is the student in either high school or college aware of the sentence variety that he has achieved. The problem is not only to make him aware of his existing sentence resources but to require of him, through the sentence graph, the use of grammatical openings which he has hitherto neglected. When a student opens a sentence with an infinitive phrase or a past participle, we immediately stamp him as more mature in the sense of style than the average student. But many students can be taught to use these mature openings, to make them a fundamental, not merely a temporary, part of their sentence resources.

To illustrate the sentence graph, let us analyze a short student description and graph it as we should expect Miss Hawthorne to do:

¹ Brooklyn College; co-author of the series, "Enjoying English" (Thomas Nelson & Newson, 1939-43); co-author of *Freshman Reports His World* (Stackpole, 1943); author of *Milton in the Puritan Revolution* (Thomas Nelson, 1941); general editor of the complete edition of Milton's prose in preparation for the Yale University Press.

STUFFED WITH RED PEPPER

Once I ate a stink bug. He was hidden in a luscious red raspberry, one of a handful which I should have put into the basket I was supposed to be filling. Instead, I popped the handful into my mouth and bit into the middle of him. If he wasn't stuffed with red pepper, he certainly tasted like it. For hours afterwards the lining of my mouth was drawn and wrinkled and my tongue burned uncomfortably.—DOROTHY HAWTHORNE.

Here is a passage of five sentences, all but one opening with a different grammatical construction, each of them of different length. The first sentence opens with the adverb *once*, the second with the subject *he*, the third with the adverb *instead*, the fourth with an adverbial clause, and the fifth with a prepositional phrase, *for hours afterwards*.

SENTENCE GRAPH²

Each of the dashes represents three words.

Opening	Length
1. Adverb	--
2. Subject	-----
3. Adverb	-----
4. Adverbial clause	----
5. Prepositional phrase	-----

By analyzing the sentence graph, we have at once an interesting portrait of the student's sentence resources, even in such a brief paper. Only two of the sentences open with the same grammatical construction, an adverb. Only one of the five sentences opens with a subject. The adverbial clause does not open with the

² Connecting the last dashes in the lines will turn this into a conventional line graph, if the reader prefers that form.

usual *when* or *while*. Examining the sentence length, we find that the shortest sentence contains six words, the longest twenty-six, and that the average length is fifteen words.

Now let us look at a portion of another student paper in which, though deeply moved by the experience she describes, the author writes with conscious variation of sentence structure:

SO BROWN AND SKINNY

Until recently I always had the impression that my mother hated me. From my early childhood I sensed her hostility. When my brother and I were yet very young, it was always he whom she took on her lap; it was his hair she stroked, not mine. How I envied him! I would have given my front tooth (which I had pulled and was saving in a match box) to be in his place on her lap. Especially on Sundays did I admire my mother. To go to church, she wore her suit—a beautiful blue serge one with a grey silk vestee upon which were embroidered bluebirds. To be near her thrilled me; yet apparently she did not notice my existence. Then, too, I felt very much abused and neglected. While my mother was washing clothes, when I was about ten years old, I came in, sat down on a stool near her and began to cry. Her attention aroused by my loud sobs, she asked what the trouble was. In heart-broken tones I moaned, "How sad the world is; how sad everything is! Why are we living at all?" At this she gave me an exasperated push and blurted out, "Quit acting like a dying duck! Go out and play like other children." Often on Saturdays when we were getting a bath, so we would look nice when Father came home from work, I heard my mother remark about me, "My, what an ugly child—so brown and skinny. Not at all like my others. I am half ashamed to admit she's mine." Of course, sensitive as I was, I was convinced that she wished I had never been born, and all in all felt very miserable.—MARY HOLT.

In this story, "So Brown and Skinny," Miss Holt achieves rich variety of sentence structure when judged in terms of initial elements only. Two of her sentences open with infinitives, though one, it is true, *To go to church*, is a rather awkward

usage. If this is the first time she has used the infinitive to open a sentence, however, she will certainly use it in future papers. No one could use an infinitive in such a personal record and not remember it. Another mature usage, even more unexpected in a college paper than the infinitive, is the use of the absolute construction in sentence 11, *Her attention aroused by my loud sobs . . .* Then, too, Miss Holt has given unexpected intensity and variation to her sentences by use of the exclamation in sentence 3 and bits of conversation in sentences 12, 13, and 14. Exclamations, bits of dialogue, and questions always heighten structural variety. In terms of variety of sentence length, Miss Holt's paper is also commendable. Her shortest sentence is five words long, her longest thirty-six, her average sentence length fifteen words. Many students tend to write sentences

SENTENCE GRAPH

Opening	Length
1. Adverb	- - - -
2. Prepositional phrase	- - -
3. Adverbial clause	- - - - -
4. Exclamation	-
5. Subject	- - - - -
6. Adverb	- -
7. Infinitive	- - - - -
8. Infinitive	- - - - -
9. Adverb	- - -
10. Adverbial clause	- - - - -
11. Absolute construction	- - - -
12. Prepositional phrase	- - "Exclamation - - - . Question - - ."
13. Prepositional phrase	- - - - "Verb - - . Verb - - ."
14. Adverb	- - - - - "Exclamation - - - ! Fragment - - . Subject - - - ."
15. Prepositional phrase	- - - - -

construction in sentence 11, *Her attention aroused by my loud sobs . . .* Then, too, Miss Holt has given unexpected intensity and variation to her sentences by use of the exclamation in sentence 3 and bits of conversation in sentences 12, 13, and 14. Exclamations, bits of dialogue, and questions always heighten structural variety. In terms of variety of sentence length, Miss Holt's paper is also commendable. Her shortest sentence is five words long, her longest thirty-six, her average sentence length fifteen words. Many students tend to write sentences

of monotonously similar length—twelve, fifteen, or twenty words—as well as of similar structure, subjects generally appearing first in the sentence with monotonous regularity.

In using the sentence graph, it is not necessary, of course, for the student to analyze each grammatical construction in the whole sentence. He merely tries for variation of the opening grammatical element of each sentence. Often, it is true, he is not able even to identify the opening phrase.

Preliminary work, of course, in the recognition and use of the grammatical elements is a necessity on the college and high-school levels. Only with the mastery of such elements as the present and past participles, the infinitive, the absolute construction, the prepositional phrase, the adverbial clause, is the student able to recognize the grammatical elements of his own sentence openings. Generally speaking, students must be able to write sentences of their own, opening with these elements, even to speak them in class, before it is possible for them to vary sentences in their own stories and essays. With preliminary preparation such as this, however, the teacher can quickly secure results by requiring eight or ten different grammatical constructions in sentence openings in the assigned theme, giving a separate mark of achievement to the sentence graph and cautioning each student to reduce subject-first sentences to one-fourth or one-fifth of the whole number.

A useful approach in teaching variety of sentence structure is to analyze a mimeographed story like the one about Professor Harris below:

PROFESSOR HARRIS

It was difficult to sit calmly in one of Professor Harris' chemistry classes. He was tall and

energetic. He was constantly on the move. He would breeze into class like a whirlwind, dressed always in blue pants and an old white linen coat. He lectured in nervous tension, his blue eyes dancing, his fingers twitching. He became irritable rather often. He was a good teacher, but we all felt the strain of his personality. I can see his fingers crunching his notes to this day.

SENTENCE GRAPH

1. Subject	----
2. Subject	-
3. Subject	--
4. Subject	-----
5. Subject	----
6. Subject	-
7. Subject	-----
8. Subject	----

The students may then be asked to revise this story in discussion, opening each sentence in a different way. It is possible, of course, for the student to give these sentences more varied openings without a knowledge of grammar. Without realizing what he has done, he will probably use an infinitive phrase, a participial phrase, a prepositional phrase, a dependent clause, and an adverb as sentence openers.

PROFESSOR HARRIS

To sit calmly in one of Professor Harris' chemistry classes was difficult. Tall and energetic, he was constantly on the move. Like a whirlwind he would breeze into class, dressed always in blue pants and an old white linen coat. His blue eyes dancing, his fingers twitching, he lectured in nervous tension. Rather often he became irritable. Although he was a good teacher, we all felt the strain of his personality. To this day I can see his fingers crunching his notes.

SENTENCE GRAPH

1. Infinitive	---
2. Two adjectives	--
3. Prepositional phrase	----
4. Absolute construction	----
5. Adverb	--
6. Adverbial clause	-----
7. Prepositional phrase	---

This approach to structural variety does not take into account the internal elements of a sentence, so marked in such authors as Hawthorne, Gibbon, and Macaulay. Only the most advanced students are able to recognize all the grammatical elements of each sentence. It is possible, however, for each student with some fundamental training in grammar to imitate sentences in the classics that he himself selects as having the kind of structure he would like to possess in his own sentence resources.

A final word of caution to those who attempt the sentence graph: The student must be warned rigorously to avoid in

his graph such words as *noun*, *pronoun*, *adjective*, *conjunction*. Although these words represent grammatical elements, they are unimportant for variety. A noun or pronoun almost invariably is the subject and should be named as such. An adjective first in the sentence usually modifies the subject and therefore is of no value to variety. Neither, of course, does a conjunction such as *but* or *and* contribute to variety. Such possessive pronouns as *his* or *her* or *its* fall into the same category. Each teacher who makes use of the sentence graph will, of course, adapt it to his own needs and methods with appropriate improvements.

On the Teaching of Interpretation

WALLACE A. BACON¹

THE tendency in American colleges and universities to distinguish between English and speech as areas of study and to set up separate faculties to direct the work in each of the areas has led to certain misunderstandings, from time to time, of the work which is being done in one or the other of the two departments. While there are doubtless many English teachers who *do* know, for example, what is being done in contemporary courses in the oral interpretation of literature, there are more and more who do not, largely because their contact with this aspect of the speech curriculum is no longer direct. The present paper seeks, therefore, to set forth for such teachers an explanation of what modern work in interpretation is, in the hope that such an explana-

tion may prove suggestive to the teacher of literature in the department of English.

Interpretation—let us say it at once—is descended from what was only recently known as “elocution.” Every teacher of English knows to his horror what “elocution” was. The feeling persists in many quarters that interpretation is just the same thing by another name. The truth is, however, that almost all teachers of interpretation share the general reprehension of the methods of the old school of elocution and that interpretation cannot fairly be judged by such techniques.

It is the function of teachers of interpretation to teach students to read aloud effectively. Since any teacher ought to be concerned not alone with *how* a student reads but also with *what* he reads, interpretation today is concerned largely, after

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initial lessons in which some teachers use very simple materials, with the oral reading of literature. The work in interpretation with which the writer is most intimately familiar is organized as a separate department within a school of speech and includes an extensive program of study. Every freshman is required to take a one-quarter course in interpretation. In this one-quarter course he is taught how to read from poetry and prose of a rather considerable range in such a manner as to communicate most effectively the full meaning of a piece of literature, that is, to give his audience as full a sense of both "logical content" and "emotional content" (which are, of course, really one) as possible.

Teachers of interpretation, except where they are hangers-on from the old-school elocutionists, are not concerned with developing vocal gymnasts, exhibitionists to perform for the local ladies at their Wednesday teas, though there is no reason why students, once carefully prepared, ought *not* to read when invited. They are concerned, rather, that the student know as completely as possible the full meaning of the literature which he is reading, that he develop good taste in literature, and that, when he reads, he strive as meticulously as possible to reproduce the writer's intent.

To that end, a second course in interpretation is required of all sophomores in the school of which this paper speaks. This course goes more deliberately into the problem of analyzing the material, of discovering ways of getting as close as possible to the writer's intention. Students are encouraged, if they wish—and here interpretation is somewhat more old-fashioned than some departments of English today—to read at length in biographies of writers for clues as to possibilities of interpreting: to read, for example,

of Gerard Manley Hopkins' education and career in the church, in order to come as close as possible to the state of mind which produced such a poem as "The Windhover," or to study the life and times of Chaucer, in order better to understand the milieu of *The Canterbury Tales*, or, more specifically, to look into the life of Emily Dickinson for help in understanding the pronominal references which baffle them in some of her cryptic lyrics (even though they find the subject debatable). It is no more curious that the interpreter wishes to absorb as much as possible of the mind which animates the literature that he reads than that the pianist should wish to respect the intentions of the composer. Granted two students of equal vocal equipment and intelligence, the student who brings the greater stock of pertinent reading to bear on the material which he reads aloud is likely to produce the better reading. We are perfectly used to assuming that the student of literature becomes a better student as he increases the body of knowledge at his command, but all too often it is assumed that a reader need depend only upon the text of his reading and the oral skill with which he is endowed. It is amazing to see how, faced with the specific problem of communicating a piece of writing to a visible audience, a student will work for the understanding of what he reads, because, just as surely as he rises, faces his audience, and reads without adequate preparation, he is subject to sharp attack by his fellow-students. And if he does a superlative piece of reading, the enthusiastic response of the class is frequently a very exciting reward.

All this while, of course, the teacher is spending considerable time on voice problems—breath control, tone quality, projection, etc. But these are not ends in themselves. They get attention only in

order that the student may more successfully cope with the literature which he is presenting. And such reading problems as timing, phrasing, pointing, and handling meter and rhyme are kept carefully subordinated to the literature: that is, they get attention only because the proper treatment of such matters serves enormously to increase the effectiveness of what the student reads. Attention to mechanics for their own sake will call down upon the student's head charges of "affectation," "overconsciousness," "insincerity." Students are sometimes mercilessly critical on this score.

On the advanced levels, in the school being discussed, there are courses in the interpretation of nineteenth- and twentieth-century poetry, in the interpretation of the novel and the short story, in the interpretation of Greek drama, Shakespeare, and modern drama. There is even an advanced course (for seniors and graduate students, carefully selected) in specific authors, one quarter being given, for example, to the works of John Donne. In such a course, meeting for two 2-hour sessions weekly, students read extensively in the writings of the author, study the critical works dealing with the literature, and thresh out in heated discussions the meanings to be found in the texts. Then, finally, each student gives an oral reading program of half an hour in length drawn from the poetry and prose of Donne. The two most successful readers may later be invited to read again before the student assembly. The whole problem of motivation, often difficult in the English classroom, is made much simpler here because the student has an active part to perform in the interpretation of the literature. No problem of analysis—even if it be the exhaustive classification of imagery or the thorough consideration of metrical problems—will stop him, provided that he

realizes the value of the analysis for successful oral reading. Experience shows readily enough that, if the reader is to recreate as vividly as possible the imagery of the material which he has chosen to read, close and careful study of the sensory appeals, together with the logical content, is highly desirable; a student who wishes to read Gerard Manley Hopkins will gain greatly by examining in detail the effects peculiar to sprung rhythm. It becomes a question of some importance to the reader to know whether Macbeth says that his hand will the multitudinous seas incarnadine making the *green* one *red*, or, as some suggest, making the green *one red*. It illuminates the text to make the student aware of the shift in tension in the word *waste* as Richard II says, "I wasted time, and now doth time waste me," where the dead metaphor suddenly comes vividly to life. Examples may be multiplied indefinitely.

Such an attitude toward interpretation far outdates the mechanical manipulation of voice and body with which the recent elocutionists too frequently contented themselves. Reading as an art which concerns itself with the communication of meaning was widely discussed in the eighteenth century in England, and most of the principles for which new battles have had to be waged were there set forth in one form or another.² And, of course, the tradition of the Greek rhapsodes, the activities of scop and gleeman, lie in the same tradition of sharing with an audience the pleasures to be found in reading a piece of literature.

² A dissertation describing this development has recently been completed at Northwestern University by Daniel Vandraegen, of the University of California at Los Angeles. While the historical development of interpretation is, of course, studied in some detail in the graduate seminar, it plays little part in

It is interesting to discover how quickly, in hearing a student read orally from a play of Shakespeare, for example, the teacher can sense whether or not the student understands what he is reading. When one of the students read Cleopatra's "Cut my lace, Charmian, come!" (*Antony and Cleopatra*, I, 3, 71) with a completely relaxed body, it was at once apparent that she did not know what "lace" meant; and, indeed, she replied to a question about it that she thought Cleopatra must have been crocheting! A false emphasis, an uncertainty in the voice, a lack of proper subordination within a speech, will betray every time the student's lack of adequate understanding. And how the students will debate over a problem of characterization, an ambiguous line, a dubious meaning! Class hours are likely to be exciting when they are in the hands of the students and are carefully directed.

There is time for lectures, but not enough time. One cannot, in a class in interpretation, except in rare instances, spend as much time on historical materials, literary backgrounds, linguistic problems, as he would like to, though every bit of help which scholarly research can give ought to be accepted warmly. Hence the teacher of interpretation must welcome the help of the department of English. But the class in interpretation can give that close, careful attention to text which all too often gets passed over in the English class today. The department of English ought, too, to welcome the help of the class in interpretation. The poet and playwright, in particular, gain by being heard as well as read. There is a value in the music of words which silent reading largely ignores.

the subject matter of undergraduate courses, except as a knowledge of that history affects the methods of the teacher.

If it be asked, Where does the work in interpretation lead? the answer must be that it leads where any study in the humanities leads or ought properly to lead—to the development in the individual of taste and judgment, to the increasing of his ability to derive pleasure from all that men have written. During the course of the past year, for example, it has been a source of distinct pleasure to see a weekly assembly of some three hundred students listen attentively and enthusiastically to programs of capable readings from the work of such varied writers as James Joyce, Oscar Wilde, T. S. Eliot, Tennessee Williams, Walt Whitman, Gertrude Stein, Stephen Vincent Benét, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Keats, Shakespeare, Francis Thompson, and Wordsworth, and to hear students in classrooms, frequently to the applause of their fellow-students, read from *all* the plays of Shakespeare, from the great British and American poets of the last two centuries, the plays of Ibsen and Chekhov and Shaw, the great Greek dramas, and from many other writers and times. It is no overstatement to say that some of the most moving Shakespeare I have ever heard, as student, as theatergoer, or as teacher, I have heard in the past year within the walls of my own classroom from my own undergraduate and graduate students.³ It is more than *teaching* the pleasures of literature, this teaching of interpretation: it is *discovering* the pleasures of literature with your students in an exciting way.

Thus interpretation and English are concerned with complementary aspects of the same problem. They ought, I think, to go hand in hand. This paper will have succeeded in its object if it helps, even in a small measure, to effect that desirable and necessary union of effort.

³ And, it must be confessed, some of the worst Shakespeare, too.

Current English Forum

HAROLD B. ALLEN, ADELINE C. BARTLETT, MARGARET M. BRYANT (*chairman*)

ARCHIBALD A. HILL, JAMES B. MCMILLAN, KEMP MALONE, RUSSELL THOMAS

IN DEFENSE OF THE ABSOLUTE

This article will use the nominative absolute construction as a measure of how far the books that purport to teach us how to use our language, even some of the generally good ones, have to go if their grammatical information is to bear any useful relation to rhetoric, if it is to be functional in the sense of functioning in the analysis and practice of writing. The nominative absolute construction is a thoroughly established idiom, about of an age with the perfect and progressive verb forms; it is neat and terse in expository writing and indispensable in descriptive and narrative writing; and yet it is almost uniformly misrepresented and, as a consequence of the misrepresentation, abused and condemned.

Here are some of the hard words applied to the construction, arranged and labeled to show the particulars of the bill. Its origin: "un-English" (Sweet, *A New English Grammar*, Part II); "generally an alien air" (Fowler, *The King's English*); "not idiomatic" (Perrin, *A Guide and Index to English*). Its present level: "uncolloquial" (Sweet); "somewhat literary" (Bryant, *A Functional English Grammar*); "almost altogether a literary construction" (Kennedy, *Current English*). Its grammatical character: "weak," "difficult to manage" (Ward, *What Is English?*); "a syntactical shortcut of a somewhat noncommittal sort" (Kennedy); several (Kennedy, Ward, and Pence, *A Grammar of Present-Day English*) regard it as a source of error, apparently because they regard it as an introductory sentence element that may be confused with the participle and lead to dangling participles. Its stylistic effect: "stiff" (Ward); "usually

awkward" (Perrin). Five of these books admonish us to avoid the construction.

It is true that these writers, if granted their examples, could make good their judgments. The trouble is that they would be describing the elephant by reference only to the tail. In their confected examples the position of the absolute construction is nearly always before the governing clause, and the grammatical relation implied is always time, cause, condition, or concession. The key to the defense of the absolute is that these uses are all but negligible. The major use is to add detail to the sentence, what grammarians call "attendant circumstances," but to which Curme adds "manner" and Jespersen "descriptive details." For simplicity I would say that the major use is to add narrative details, picturing an action ("Ellen watched her receding, a large woman, *her skirt kicking out in little points at the hem as she walked.*" "An owl sang in a tree by a farm gate, *his notes coming in a slow trill*" [E. M. Roberts]); descriptive details, static rather than active, picturing appearance rather than action ("Her eyes were quite wide, almost black, *the lamplight on her face and the tiny reflections of his face in her pupils like peas in two inkwells*" [Faulkner]); and, I think one has to add, explanatory details ("To yoke me as his yokefellow, *our crimes our common cause*" [Joyce]). Sometimes the absolute construction is introduced by the preposition *with*, here an empty form word ("The bull, *with his tongue out*, his barrel heaving, was watching the gypsy" [Hemingway]). In these uses the absolute nearly always follows the governing clause, filling in details of the action, picture,

or statement which the governing clause merely blocks out in general terms.

Curme says that it is "a terse and convenient construction for all practical purposes." The type with *with* (He sat at the table, *with collar off*, etc.) he calls "native English." It was, he says, "common in Old English and the older stages of all the Germanic languages and is still everywhere in common use." Poutsma concurs in this evaluation of the type with *with*: "frequently met with, also in ordinary spoken language."

But if writers of textbooks do not attend to scholarship, they must read fiction, and a few pages from almost any piece of modern narrative writing would provide data for determining the present status of the construction. For further illustration I have taken the four novels and stories from which I have just cited examples. In 180 pages there are, by my count, 440 absolute constructions, very close to $2\frac{1}{2}$ to the page, with as many as 10 or 11 to a single page and as many as 5 in series in a single sentence. They range in frequency from 88 in the first 50 pages of *Ulysses* ("Modern Library"), 126 in the first 50 of Roberts' *The Time of Man* (Viking), 79 in the 30 pages of Hemingway's *The Undeclared* ("Modern Library"), to 146 in the first 50 of Faulkner's *Sanctuary* (Penguin). This makes an average per page of 1.8, 2.5, 2.6, and 2.9.

Of the 440, only 1, indicating time, cannot be brought readily under the categories of narrative, descriptive, and explanatory details. Only 9 stand before the governing clause. Several come within it. Five absolutes are punctuated as sentences in Hemingway, 20 in Joyce, and 29 in Roberts. In Hemingway and Joyce they usually function as narrative sentences, but a few in Joyce are used for a kind of lyric refrain ("A tide westering, moondrawn, in her wake").

As to the grammatical character of the construction itself, the common descriptions are not quite accurate. It regularly consists of two parts, a subject and a predicate, either of which may be compound. The subject is usually a noun rather than a pronoun

and therefore shows no case form. If a pronoun, it is usually nominative in standard English, though I have seen the accusative in Hemingway. The predicate does not necessarily involve a participle. If there is a verb, it may be a participle, present or past, with or without complements, or it may—though this is rare—be an infinitive ("Meanwhile the cardinal is in jail, the sentence to be pronounced tomorrow" [Lowell Thomas, February 7, 1949]). Where there is no verb (and a verb is not to be thought of as "missing" or to be "supplied"), the predicate may be a noun ("As the bull lowered his head to hook, Fuentes leaned backward, his arms came together and rose, his two hands touching, the banderillos two red descending lines" [Hemingway]); a pronoun ("They ate the food in silence, the only sound that of the clicking knives and sweeping spoons" [Roberts, p. 64]); an adjective or adverb ("... the horse facing the bull, its ears forward, its lips nervous . . ." [Hemingway]); a prepositional phrase ("Zurito sat there, his feet in the boxstirrups . . ." [Hemingway]); or a comparison with *like* ("Across the child Temple gazed at the woman's back, her face like a small pale mask beneath the precarious hat" [Faulkner]).

The loose way in which the absolute construction is related to the rest of the sentence, instead of being a weakness, as Kennedy seems to feel, is one of its advantages, especially in descriptive-narrative writing. In modern English the typical sentence in this kind of writing is cumulative, the main clause merely a base to which to attach, not subordinate clauses with precise conjunctions, but loosely related appositives, prepositional phrases, participles, and absolutes. A second advantage of the absolute is that it requires no verb, always an asset when the sense calls for nothing more than a copula. A third is that it has a subject of its own, whereas the participle, with which it shares the main burden of carrying details, must take its subject from the governing element. The advantage of being able to notice the parts separately from the whole can be seen

in a sentence such as this: "She jumped from her seat and ran up the banks of the ravine, terrified, clutching at the brush, dry stones rattling back in her path" (Roberts).

So far I have offered only isolated sentences. To illustrate the construction in context one could use a passage that George Mayberry chose for analysis (*New Republic*, CX [May 1, 1944], 608) because of the "clean-limbed functional quality of the prose"—prose, he says, "that superbly fulfills its function; here of rendering the color, pagentry, and above all the movement of a circus performance as it works upon a boy's imagination." The boy is Huck Finn, and the book is the fountainhead of the colloquial tradition in American literature.

It was a real bully circus. It was the splendor that ever was when they all COME RIDING IN, two and two, and gentleman and lady, side by side, *the men just in their drawers and undershirts, and no shoes nor stirrups, and resting their hands on their thighs easy and comfortable*—there must 'a' been twenty of them—

and every lady with a lovely complexion, and perfectly beautiful, and looking just like a gang of real sure-enough queens, and dressed in clothes that cost millions of dollars, and just littered with diamonds. It was a powerful fine sight; I never see anything so lovely. And then one by one they got up and stood, and WENT A-WEAVING around the ring so gentle and wavy and graceful, *the men looking ever so tall and airy and straight, with their heads bobbing and skimming along away up there under the tent-roof, and every lady's rose-leafy dress flapping soft and silky around her hips, and she looking like the most loveliest parasol.*

And then faster and faster they WENT, all of them dancing, first one foot stuck out in the air and then the other, the horses leaning more and more, and the ringmaster going round and round the center pole, cracking his whip and shouting "Hi!—hi!" and the clown cracking jokes behind him, and by and by all hands dropped the reins and every lady put her knuckles on her hips and every gentleman folded his arms, and then how the horses did lean over and hump themselves!

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What's the Answer?

Professor James Conant of Harvard has suggested that these tests be applied to our public schools. Doubtless he thinks they could also be applied to our colleges.

"Are the students of high intellectual ability being identified, are they being stimulated, are they being guided into proper channels?"

"Are the boys and girls with artistic gifts, musical or in the graphic arts, being given an opportunity to develop these talents?"

"Are the students who do not fall into either of the preceding categories (and they are by far the greatest number) being provided with a program which keeps their interest high?"

"Does the education seem to them and their parents relevant to their ambitions and their needs?"

Round Table

WOONG THE CASUAL READER

I once asked a book salesman why publishers were willing to print so many texts for freshman composition. "Oh," he replied, "English teachers are never satisfied, and we can count on their changing books about every two years." His jest may be accepted as an indirect compliment, it seems to me, if this biennial dissatisfaction manifests a desire for improvement and not just academic whimsicality.

Fortunately, a similar type of criticism is being turned on the introductory courses in literature. It has become painfully evident to conscientious English teachers, in both the high schools and the colleges, that the conventional study of literature has failed to develop either the skills or the habits necessary to enjoyable reading. In fact, many teachers feel that the usual training has tended to discourage interest in reading and even to create aversion for so-called "literature." Few students leave their courses in literature with a keen desire to continue reading or with the knowledge of how to read effectively. Accordingly, more and more teachers are urging the inauguration of a different approach to the problem. They want an opportunity to work toward the creation of an interest in reading which will persist after the awarding of a degree. And they see in the veteran the promise of a rewarding response. More mature, and generally more eager, than his prewar counterpart, the ex-GI is willing to be shown that books can have a place in the business of living. Since the boredom of military service drove many to reading anything in print, they have at least made a start toward becoming interested in books as a vital, active part of an educated man's existence. Yet we continue to offer them the historical survey of English poetry and prose as an introduction to the world of letters.

This conventional "survey" is justifiably the target for most of the criticism. The theory that prolonged exposure to "the best that has been thought and said" will develop in students an active craving for the "masterpieces" should be sharply challenged. Too often it not only kills potential interest in the "classics" but also in literature. "Good" reading, especially for that majority of students who take the courses only in order to meet requirements for degrees, becomes identified with the bewildering remoteness of Beowulf, Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, or the "po'try of Wadsworth, Kelley, and Sheets."

Yet the alternatives are as numerous as the freshman composition texts. One centers attention on the types of literature, another on contemporary writing, another on modern world literature, another on the "great books," another on current "best sellers," another on the "humanities." All try to avoid the stigma of the historical approach by emphasizing the subject matter and the pleasures of reading. But it seems to me that all have certain limitations and weaknesses which can be ameliorated, if not wholly eliminated, in a course combining some of the best features of the variations.

The English department of Cleveland College has attempted to devise such a course in its "Introduction to Literature." It is outlined here in the hope that other departments will test it and make improvements. It should be noted that the "introduction" is not intended as a replacement for the "survey." The latter has an important function in the curriculum, but it should be offered primarily to English majors and to other students especially interested in literature. The "introduction," on the other hand, should be treated as a general service course for all students, just as freshman composition is.

At Cleveland College, "Introduction to Literature" covers four forms of literary expression: drama, poetry, fiction (excepting the short story, which is studied in the second semester of the freshman year), and nonfiction (omitting the expository essay, which is used in connection with composition). One-fourth of the total number of assignments is allotted to each form. Since poetry is the pitfall of most students—its disproportionate representation in anthologies has been partly responsible for the failure of the historical survey—its share of assignments is divided over two semesters. A similar arrangement holds for fiction in order to spread the reading of novels. Drama is included in only the first semester, nonfiction in the second.

We find it effective to begin with the drama, since plays afford a convenient and interesting unit of study and since few students are familiar with them. Two collections are used, one for the texts of modern plays, the other for texts and critical analysis. *Watch on the Rhine* is particularly well suited for the first assignment, since the students' war experiences give the play point and interest. It provokes discussion, since many of the veterans have not bothered to learn why they fought a war. Paradoxically, a few are critical of Kurt Mueller, insisting that no man will sacrifice himself for an ideal, and certainly not just to assure "a childhood for every child."

Then we read *Abe Lincoln in Illinois*, *Winterset* (which is useful in discussing verse in drama and in preparing the student for reading Shakespeare), *Beyond the Horizon*, *R. U. R.*, *The Cherry Orchard*, and *Hedda Gabler*. In studying this group, we place emphasis on reading for pleasure and understanding; historical and technical matters are ignored. However, in using the second text, *Understanding Drama*, the class studies technical terms, theories of comedy and tragedy, methods of characterization, etc., while reading *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *The School for Scandal*, *Rosmersholm*, *The Way of the World*, and *Henry IV: Part I*. The instructor anticipates the fact that few stu-

dents can read Shakespeare with understanding until they have learned how to read. They even miss the humor in Falstaff until they have heard the speeches read aloud in class. Then some become interested enough to read *Henry IV: Part III*.

While studying the drama, the students have been reading a novel outside class. We use at least one modern novel and one "classic" each semester. During class discussion of the first book, the instructor explains the technique of the novel, the theme, characterization, etc. This first assignment in fiction receives careful and detailed treatment. Then the student is left to his own resources in reading the second, and his progress is checked by having him compare the two books. The procedure is repeated in the second semester. *Of Human Bondage* and *The Return of The Native* are a useful pair, but the instructor is encouraged to use the combinations in which he is interested. In fact, the opportunity given the instructor to bring to the class any related material is one of the strong points of the course.

Poetry is assigned at the end of the term, when the students have become familiar with the plan of the course and have increased their reading-power a little. Since the big problem is to teach them how to read and understand figurative language, their experience with it in the study of drama and the novel helps to prepare them for the language of poetry. We begin with narrative poetry—ballads, dramatic monologues, romances—and emphasize the story first, then the language and form. Biographical material and literary theory are ignored. After a careful analysis of "story" poems like "My Last Duchess," "Fra Lippo Lippi," "Patterns," "Miniver Cheevy," and "Mending Wall," the students begin to understand that some poetry makes sense and that it expresses meaning in a way that prose cannot. Then they are ready for satiric verse and sonnets. The sonnet—ranging from Millay's back to Spenser's—provides an excellent medium for analysis of imagery and structure; it is the perfect transition from narrative to more difficult lyric verse.

We read the poems aloud in class, explaining the imaginative comparisons, their relation to the theme and the pattern of the poem. The process not only leads the student to an understanding of the beauty of the expression but also challenges his reading skill. It may leave him even with a liking for poetry!

The second semester, in addition to continuing the study of poetry and the novel, substitutes the informal essay for plays. Starting with the humorous essayists—Thurber, Parker, Leacock, White, etc.—the class works back to the standard English essay-writers. Some instructors elect to use contemporary periodicals for the modern examples of the form—*Harper's*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *Partisan Review*, *New Republic*, etc.—thereby acquainting the reader with journals a little above the level of the *Reader's Digest*, *Life*, and *Newsweek*, which students insist they read regularly.

We do not claim that such a course is the perfect solution to the problem of creating an interest in worth-while reading, but we do believe that it represents a more constructive approach to that problem than do the traditional methods. Certainly it has the advantage of not alienating the student in the first week, which is apt to happen with the "survey." At the same time, it avoids the limitations found in the courses which offer only contemporary writers or the established classics. "Great" books demand great readers. Until the high schools produce them, the colleges must try to do the job. They cannot if they continue to assume that the average undergraduate will absorb the richness of good reading through osmosis. By starting with contemporary writing, with which the student has a vague acquaintance, and working back to a few of the masterpieces, English teachers can at least show students how to read and may even win the casual reader to an understanding of the pleasures to be found in good books. It is a consummation devoutly to be wished.

PAUL CARTER

CLEVELAND COLLEGE OF WESTERN RESERVE

WHAT COLLEGE STUDENTS WANT TO LEARN IN FRESHMAN ENGLISH

Information regarding students' desires for certain skills and understandings was obtained in two surveys in Phoenix College, one made in most of the freshman English classes in the fall of 1947 and the other made in a smaller number of freshman English classes in the fall of 1948. About one-third of the total number were veterans; about two-thirds of the number of students polled were men. The survey was conducted under conditions that insured an honest expression of student opinion; consequently, it is believed that the information obtained is valid—that it accurately reflects the values placed on the various aspects of English by the freshmen of Phoenix College during those two years. It is the opinion of the writer that the findings resulting from these samplings of over seven hundred students have significance for other colleges also.

The need for such a poll was based upon the assumptions that college students have some understanding of their own shortcomings and of their communication needs and that the instructors charged with the responsibility for teaching the persons polled would make judicious use in each class of the information received. (The findings of our standardized tests are used to place students needing remedial work in a course meeting five hours a week for three hours' credit, but the results of this poll are applicable to any of our classes as a guide to a shifting of emphasis.)

Three explanatory notes are needed to introduce the text and findings of the student polls: first, the writer knows that the items in the questionnaire do not cover all possibilities; second, the students were asked to check among the last twenty items only those skills that they felt needed most attention (an average of nine were checked); and, third, the numbers opposite the last twenty items indicate the order of need as expressed by the student group as a whole.

Write "Yes" or "No" in the spaces provided.
No opinion entered as "No."

	PER CENT			
	1947 (400 Students Polled)		1948 (337 Students Polled)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Do you think that your worldly success depends on your ability				
(1) to write correctly and effectively?	70	30	79	21
(2) to read factual material objectively and analytically?	86	14	91	9
(3) to speak correctly and confidently?	92	8	93	7
Do you think that your personal development (your high pleasure in enlarging your environment and growing in your appreciation of it) depends on your ability				
(1) to appraise the craftsmanship of writers of imaginative fiction?	40	60	49	51
(2) to appreciate the subjective emotions of those perhaps greater than you—poets, novelists, dramatists?	68	32	67	33
(3) to cultivate an elasticity of thought through an exposure to diversity of intelligent attitudes expressed in literature?	87	13	87	13
(4) to relate your attitudes to the fundamental needs of society as revealed in the pages of literature?	66	34	67	33

If you gave an affirmative answer to all the above questions, you owe much to good English teachers and the grace of God. Now will you place a check after each of the following subjects and activities on which we should concentrate if this course is to be most beneficial to you.

	1947	1948
	Order of Need	
Vocabulary	1	1
Punctuation	8	9
Grammar	8	3
Usage	3	0
Spelling	7	2
Sentence development	11	13
Paragraph development	5	10
Coherence	14	12
Unity	15	15
Letter-writing	12	16
Report-writing	6	8
Creative writing	13	11
Study of style	19	19
Library research	20	17
Reading	2	4
Study of thought-processes	16	14

	1947	1948
	Order of Need	
Exposition of ideas	9	5
Developing literary standards	18	20
Public speaking	10	7
Interviewing	17	18

If you have any suggestion that you believe would help make this course more worth while—a fine, memorable experience—please make it right here. [As one would expect, there was a wide variety of suggestions made here. One student said: "Vocabulary and proper usage of words are important. To me, literature is just a waste of time—to study the works of some crackpot in the early stages of history."]

Here are a few findings which have helped condition our freshman English program.

1. In 1947 vocabulary led 3 to 2 its nearest rival—reading. In 1948 vocabulary led 7 to 4 its nearest rival—spelling.
2. Both polls show that that students believe that oral English work is paramount.
3. Both polls indicate that a study of the content and craftsmanship of traditional literature is not highly valued by many of our college freshmen.
4. The old fundamentals of grammar, usage, and spelling are believed to need emphasis.
5. Students appear to favor the improvement of skills partly learned in earlier training rather than the acquisition of skills in less familiar areas.
6. The over-all results of both polls are strikingly similar—even to the inconsistency of favoring report-writing without favoring the research disciplines that should precede it.

So what? Well, the following values seem evident from the use of these polls.

There is an understanding from the start that the instructor is interested in what the student thinks and that the instructor wants to do that which will benefit the greatest number of students. The impossibility of pleasing everyone and the necessity of conducting the program in accordance with group consideration are made evident.

Furthermore, the poll is a commitment on the part of the students. It is useful as such when students hesitate to do what they know to be good for them—such as getting oral experience through conducting a class discussion.

Finally, the department has somewhat

shifted its emphasis from written to oral expression and is struggling valiantly to help students build their vocabularies—primarily through developing vocabulary awareness in the reading and expression programs.

The poll as used, however, can help the student reflect upon the magnitude of the task of learning English and help instructor and student approach that task as a common problem.

WAYNE EDLAND

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A POE OVERSIGHT

Associated with the name of Edgar Allan Poe is the somewhat traditional idea that he was a keen analyst, an "unerring, abstract reasoner." Although Poe's penetrative powers may have been acute, he is guilty of a damaging oversight in "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" that no one to my knowledge has previously discovered and published. In relating the story of the dual murders of Mme L'Espanaye and her daughter Camille, Poe failed to record the presence of blood in the room where the murders occurred. His failure to observe what here was a logical detail in the weaving of the story made the data which he presented for analysis incomplete. As concerns this particular tale, moreover, Poe's oversight does not speak well for his reputation as a sharp analyst and ratiocinator.

Mme L'Espanaye and her daughter were killed by an enraged orangutan. By Poe's account, the animal, using a razor as the death weapon, slit Mme L'Espanaye's throat so completely that her head fell off when the police lifted her body from the

pavement of the backyard where it was found. The orangutan had thrown the corpse there from the fourth-floor window of the murder-room.

Cutting off a person's head surely would produce a great deal of blood. Poe recognized this fact when he wrote: "With one determined sweep of its muscular arm it [the orangutan] nearly severed her head from her body. The sight of blood inflamed its anger into phrenzy." However, Poe failed to recognize the detail of the blood elsewhere in the story. Neither the police nor the detective Dupin reported finding blood in the room, other than that on the roots of some gray hair found on a chair. This failure left Poe in a difficult position.

Consider the damaging effect of having the police discover blood in the room. Few of the problems which confronted the police would have existed. The presence of blood would have led the police to discover all the facts that Dupin revealed, except, perhaps, the fact that the killer was an animal. That discovery is the only valid contribution of Dupin to the solution of the mystery; for Poe omitted the one certain clue that could have pointed the way to the solution by the police.

One might see a reason for Poe's oversight if the case could be established that he composed in haste. Perhaps he did. But there is evidence that he also revised his material,¹ and apparently his revisions were careful and pointed. Despite all, Poe did not discover his serious omission.

SYLVESTER RYAN

HOWARD UNIVERSITY

¹ Ernest Boll, "The Manuscript of the Murders in the Rue Morgue, and Poe's Revisions," *Modern Philology*, XL (May, 1943), 302-15.

Report and Summary

A CONFERENCE ON THE PREPARATION of College teachers sponsored jointly by the American Council of Education and the United States Office of Education was held in Chicago in December. An invitational affair, it was attended by about 160 persons representing a wide variety of educational interests. There were both general meetings, with distinguished educators as speakers, and six workshops. The work groups got to grips with the six major problems: recruitment and selection, the nature of academic preparation, the dissertation, the knowledge of teaching problems, apprenticeship, and institutional programs. Reports of the workshop discussions and the major conference speeches will shortly be published as a pamphlet by the American Council of Education. Extended passages from the speeches may be found in *Higher Education* (February 1) and some of the findings of the workshops in the same publication (February 15). This is issued semimonthly by the Office of Education, Washington, D.C. Subscription price 75 cents a year ordered through the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

IN A RECENT ISSUE OF THE *JOURNAL of the American Medical Society* occurs the following comment concerning English usage by student scientists:

Frequently attempts have been made to stimulate interest in exposition in the minds of medical scientists. Laurence M. Gould, an eminent geologist, has noticed deficiencies in expression in the printed matter of several fields of science. By virtue of his presidency of a liberal arts college, he is in a position to urge corrective measures at the educational grade where they will do the most good. He wrote:

Language, which here means the English language, may therefore be the chief concern of a liberal education. Indeed the basic characteristic of an edu-

cated man is that he be "literate and articulate in verbal discourse." Here is one of the keys to the major needs of education at all levels and in all departments. . . . If I could impose my will completely at any one point . . . I would require four years of English of all students and some extra courses in composition in the senior year for those who think they want to be scientists.¹

If Dr. Gould is successful in thus imposing his will, and if some of his students will choose medicine as the science they wish to pursue, good will be accomplished. Their ability in medical school to conform to good English usage would not militate too strongly against them; at least some of their professors could understand them.

"OUR LANGUAGE SNARL" BY HENRY J. Blossy appears in the "Spring Education Number" of *America*, a national Catholic weekly review. It is the report of a wartime censor shocked by the "multifarious orgies of maimed grammar found in nine-tenths of the censored correspondence." He makes a plea that English grammar be made a major subject in the high school, with preparatory studies in the elementary grades.

TWO INTERESTING AND VERY DIFFERENT commentaries on American colleges appear in the February *American Mercury*. Roger Burlingame describes the newly invigorated "Cooper Union, the Poor Man's College," which is still administered according to the philosophy that "science and art are two phases of living which cannot be sensibly separated"; where no distinctions are made in race, religion, sex, or color, but where they are "ruthless about ineptitude, incompetence, and uncertainty." In his "Anatomy of School Spirit," a few pages over, Lyle Owen paints a very different picture of current life on the college campus.

¹ L. M. Gould, "The Inaugural Address: Science and the Other Humanities," *Carleton College Bulletin*, XLII (November, 1945), 14-32.

It reads like Babbitt's undergraduate days and seems to footnote the truth of a remark made by Sinclair Lewis in a recent interview (*New York Times*, January 15). When asked if, were he to write *Main Street* now, he would have to make many changes, he thought not—just very minor mechanical ones.

"FRESHMAN ENGLISH AND GENERAL Education" by James I. Brown in the January *Journal of Higher Education* discusses the related problems of both. Taking as a starting point "the gross ineptitude and distressing mediocrity of the writing of many college students," Professor Brown first traces the effect of specialization on the teaching of English. He feels that at the root of almost all student failure to develop an adequate use of language are "the twin stumbling blocks of specialization and departmentalization." The antecedents of Freshman English, he says, go back to 1642, when Harvard's President Dunster established the pattern by saying that "the first year shall teach Rhetoric." Between 80 and 90 per cent of the present Freshman English courses still have that "old look." The "new look" which is emerging is called "communications," and Brown believes that, with its stress on the general rather than the specialized, "it strikes at the very heart of the cause of inadequate student expression." The new pattern is completely different, based on a different educational philosophy. It begins with a broad general foundation in the language arts followed by specialized courses in writing, speech, and literature. The "new look" in Freshman English, he says, can "now be recognized as a 'general education look' with common life activities dominating the picture."

"THE U.S. PRESS IN ACTION" IS THE theme subject of the *Reporter* (February 14), "A Fortnightly of Facts and Ideas," now about a year old. The main portion of this issue essentially is an inquiry into what is the matter with the American press. Max Ascoli, editor of the *Reporter*, in an editori-

al, "No Pause for Reflection," states as the major trouble the fact that neither dailies nor weeklies give their readers time to think. Richard Lewis in "The Paper Goes to Bed" describes a quiet day in the city room—rape, suicide, and pressure from outsiders. Dwight Macdonald analyzes what he believes the defects of "*The New York Times*—One Man's Poison." (A subsequent issue will carry a different reaction, "*The Times*—Another Man's Meat.") The battle between the press and government is described by Harold B. Hinton, the vagaries of *Life* magazine by Fred M. Hechinger, and the unhappy demise of the *New York Sun* by Llewellyn White. Address: The Reporter, 220 East Forty-second Street, New York 17. Price per year, \$5.00.

"THE DEATH OF *THE SUN*" IS ALSO discussed by Irving Kolodin, a former staff member, in the *Saturday Review of Literature* (January 28). The circumstances he describes provide very specific evidence that the American press is not merely sick; it may even be being murdered. As he concludes: "What is the aspiring youth in Journalism II to think of security in the newspaper world when a not merely celebrated but a world famous property is sold for its 'intangible assets'? He can only reflect that such able exponents of the journalist's craft as John Hersey, John Gunther, Merle Miller, and Arther Schlesinger, Jr., made their reputations either in magazines or in books devoid of newspaper blessing."

SEVERAL DISTINGUISHED WOMEN recently in public statements have taken to task the men educators who are advocating different types of education for the sexes. Dr. K. Frances Scott, president of the National Federation of Business and Professional Women and a faculty member of Smith College, speaking in Chicago a few weeks ago, warned women to be on the alert to block a trend to limit educational opportunities for women. It would appear, she said, that the men who have spoken out against giving women the same education

as men are thinking along the lines of outmoded European education, which is confined to teaching various classes of people just enough to do their predestined jobs. Again, Mildred McAfee Horton, former president of Wellesley and chief of the WAVES, in an article in the *New York Times Magazine* (January 15) explodes several "Myths about Women's Colleges." She gives specific evidence to prove that they are neither country clubs nor academic sweatshops and that most of the graduates do get married. As she succinctly remarks, "A lot of men seem to like educated wives." The major difficulty, she says, is that "we are still living in an era of stereotypes about women. Colleges have helped to shatter the notion that women can't endure mental exertion, but they have not disposed of the question as to the value of such exertion. . . . Graduates and officers of the women's colleges are tempted to wonder how long it will take to create a climate of opinion which will consider women as important to the nation as men. At present they have a sympathetic insight into the slogan of George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, 'All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others.' " Meanwhile, as Mrs. Horton concludes, "the women's colleges go on about their business doing a good job of educating one segment of tomorrow's voters, mothers, teachers, lawyers, doctors, church workers, government officials, writers, business workers, artists, farmers, labor leaders, social workers, radio technicians and producers, scientists—women."

AT PRINCETON, A MAN'S UNIVERSITY, it is interesting to note, in relation to the above points of view, that the humanities have regained their lead over the sciences (which for some time have been considered better able to educate men as men). The *New York Times* reports (January 15) that an analysis of undergraduate course selections shows that the average Princeton student is now spending more classroom hours studying philosophy, religion, English, music, and art than the sciences. The

humanities now make up 41 per cent of course choices. This flight from the sciences back to the humanities, according to Dean J. Douglas Brown, indicates that the students know that "their greatest strength will be in values they understand and accept, which guide their lives and judgments and will give them confidence to work and fight for a just cause."

IN "THE CHAM ON HORSEBACK" IN the winter *Virginia Quarterly Review* Carlos Baker puts to rout the legend of Dr. Johnson's insensibility to natural scenery. In a delightful essay he gives evidence to prove that, although Dr. Johnson's longest journey was not a happy one, nevertheless, the assertion that he was unresponsive to the beauties he met in his rambles is simply untrue. In the same issue Babette Deutsch discusses "Poetry at the Mid-Century," at which time she finds the poet a lonely soul writing frankly for those who will not listen but who alone could understand him. Coleman Parsons also contributes an essay on "The Mariner and the Albatross" in which he attempts to answer the question whether "The Ancient Mariner" is an ethically significant poem.

IN "THE LIGHTHOUSE, FACE TO Face" F. L. Overcarsh presents a new reading of Virginia Woolf's novel, *To the Lighthouse*. He describes it as a novel with the overtones of an epic and interprets it as an allegory, "with possible reference to various literature, but based principally on the Bible." This appears in the winter *Accent*.

"BOOKS STARRED AND DAGGERED," written by Virginia Woolf in 1941, is the lead essay in the *Saturday Review of Literature* (February 4), which also carries a comment on the essay by her husband Leonard Woolf, at one time literary editor of the *London Nation*. Mrs. Woolf traces the history of criticism and reviewing. The variety and diversity of opinion occasioned by the present multiplicity of reviews she

thinks operates to the disadvantage of both writer, publisher, and reader. The review, as it is now written, she contends, increases self-consciousness and diminishes strength. She thinks that by putting in its place fearless and disinterested discussion the writer would gain in range, in depth, and in power and that such a change would tell eventually upon the public mind.

A NINE-HUNDRED-PAGE *HANDBOOK of Foreign Universities* has recently been completed by the American Council of Education. A general view of higher education in each of seventy countries (no information was received from the Soviet Union) is given, along with statistics on literacy, general education conditions, and descriptions of the general practices found in the schools and colleges. Introductory chapters discuss the great possibilities of the role of universities in international co-operation, the world-wide increase in university enrolments, and the increased interchange of student teachers and research workers.

THE REORGANIZED SHAKESPEARE Association of America has changed and enlarged the format of its publication. Beginning with the recent January issue, it will now be issued four times yearly as the *Shakespeare Quarterly* and will be sent to all members of the Association. It aims to foster four interests: Shakespeare in the theater, in scholarship, in schools and libraries, and in local reading groups. The "Shakespeare Bibliography," which will be redesigned and more fully annotated in co-operation with foreign correspondents, will appear regularly in the April issue. Membership, including the *Quarterly*, will be \$3.00 annually. Address: Mr. John Fleming, Shakespeare Association of America, Inc., 322 East Fifty-seventh Street, New York.

JUNIOR COLLEGES WILL NOW BE represented by a specialist in the United States Office of Education. Dr. William R. Wood, who has been head of the English

department in Evanston (Chicago suburb) Township High School, and more recently assistant superintendent of the Evanston Township Schools and director of the Community College, has been appointed to the new position. He will be regarded, at least unofficially, as also a specialist in the humanities, which yet lack a full-time representative in the Office of Education. Dr. Wood is chairman of the NCTE Committee on Censorship of Instructional Materials for Classroom and Library.

THE VERBAL PART OF THE SCHOLASTIC Aptitude Test of the College Entrance Examination Board is regarded as one of the very best prognosticators of success in college. Now Arthur E. Traxler, of the Educational Records Bureau, shows a correlation of better than .80 between this test and the verbal part of the Junior Scholastic Aptitude Test of the Secondary Education Board administered even as early as the eighth grade. Dr. Traxler therefore recommends the employment of the JSAT by counselors trying to help students decide whether to take college-preparatory courses. This sounds reasonable if verbal aptitude is not subject to training. If this aptitude can be improved, the conclusion is that special effort should be made to develop it in the college-bound students. There is the other possibility that the verbal test is also predictive of success in business—and in citizenship.

TO SHOW THAT IT IS POSSIBLE FOR a worthy boy or girl to get a thorough training at a first-rate college at a moderate expenditure, *Good Housekeeping* magazine presents in the February issue its annual report on small colleges. It includes a list and a discussion of the individualities of more than one hundred institutions, all with a normal enrolment of less than two thousand and within the "thousand-dollar" range for the basic costs of room, board, and tuition. This should be a valuable aid to parents, teachers, and prospective college students. It is also interesting as educational

history, describing as it does the changes which have recently taken place on many campuses.

THE NEW YORK STATE BOARD OF Regents has appointed a group of nineteen leading citizens of the state to assist the Education Department and the Regents in the improvement of high school education. One of the most serious problems to be considered is that disturbing gap in the high school curriculums between college-preparatory education at one extreme and vocational education at the other.

FAMILIAR PERIODICALS ARE DISAPPEARING from the scene, and, as rapidly, new ones are taking their place. The *Strand Magazine* (British), which introduced Sherlock Holmes to the public and printed early poems and short stories by Rudyard Kipling, H. G. Wells, George Bernard Shaw, and other famous writers, will cease with its March issue after fifty-six years of publication. The reason: paper rationing and highly increased costs of production. Across the Irish Sea, in Dublin, a new monthly review of literature and art, *Envoy*, has just appeared. The first issue contains one hundred pages of fiction, poetry, criticism, essays, and reviews, as well as four photographic reproductions of recent paintings by contemporary artists. These are not confined to native authors or Irish subjects. The purpose of the editors is to "encompass main trends in current thought and artistic expression." Address: 39 Grafton Street, Dublin, Eire. Price, \$3.50 a year. In America, *Fortune* celebrates its twentieth anniversary in its February number, the contents oriented to the theme "The U.S. in the World." Meanwhile, other periodicals have bestirred themselves to editorial changes, perhaps influenced by the Ezra Pound controversy. The *Pacific Spectator* announces that it is going to publish more poetry in an effort to try to help bridge the present gap between the poets and the public. The *Western Review* is planning to print an increased amount of fiction and verse as an aid in clarifying the present literary situa-

tion. *Poetry Magazine* has acquired as its permanent editor Karl Shapiro, the distinguished American poet and Pulitzer Prize winner and one of the two Library of Congress Fellows to vote against giving the Bollingen Award to Ezra Pound. Finally, Robert M. Hutchins heads the board of a new quarterly, *Measure*, "a journal directed to those who believe in the importance of ideas." In the first issue Hutchins writes the lead article on "The Role of T. S. Eliot in Education." Publishers, Henry Regnery Company, Hinsdale, Illinois.

AUTHORITIES ON AMERICAN LITERATURE have selected the literary works to be included in "great classics of the world" being compiled by UNESCO. The American works, together with classics of other nations, will be translated into the world's major languages.

Those recommended by the most judges are: *The Scarlet Letter*, Poe's *Collected Tales* and *Collected Poems*, *Moby Dick*, *The Portrait of a Lady*, *Huckleberry Finn*, *Selected Essays and Poems of Emerson*, *Walden*.

Others listed are: *Leaves of Grass*, Frost's *Poems*, Franklin's *Autobiography*, *The Last of the Mohicans*, Irving's *Sketch Book*, *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, *My Antonia*, Emily Dickinson's *Poems*, selected plays of Eugene O'Neill, *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, *An American Tragedy*, *Babbalanza*, *Arrowsmith*, *The Education of Henry Adams*, and E. A. Robinson's *Poems*.

THE SMALL LOCAL RADIO STATIONS would be glad to make use of educational releases, if these were offered to them. When most of the stations were very powerful, covering large areas, and/or hooked into networks, broadcasting of local school material was impossible. Now in many communities the situation is entirely changed, but the school people have not realized it. Such is the burden of an article by F. G. Dickey in the *Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals* for January. Why should not English departments in low-power-station communities step in at once?

New Books

SEMANTIC PRINCIPLES

Language in Thought and Action represents a long-awaited and thoroughly welcome revision of *Language in Action*, which first came out in 1941.¹ The book has stood up fairly well in the perspective of time. In this edition, intended for use in college classes, Dr. Hayakawa strives to repair the deficiencies and eliminate the oversimplifications of the original volume.

He has changed a great deal; more than half of the material is new. The "Applications" at the end of each chapter make this a stimulating as well as provocative text for experimentation in English composition courses. General semantics cannot be learned or taught in terms of formulations, abstractions, categories, and rules. Whatever one derives from the text must become part of the blood stream of thought and speech, an organic influence motivating the art of writing and controlling the dynamic sources of behavior. Semantic "principles" become functional and fruitful only in so far as they are tested and confirmed by observation and experience. Here, then, is a splendid object-lesson in education: material about semantics which at the same time enables the student to conduct independent research into semantic methods.

For the first time, too, Dr. Hayakawa has sought to make explicit the ethical assumptions underlying the science of semantics. What is more, there is an attempt to arrive at greater consistency and precision in the definition of technical terms. The most challenging section devoted to new material is a chapter which presents what purports to be

a semantic theory of literature, one which attempts to combine psychological and literary insights in the evaluation of literary art. Based in large part on the work of such critics as I. A. Richards and Kenneth Burke, it draws implications that are bound to arouse considerable controversy. Dr. Hayakawa would make literature serve as a psychological purge, a therapeutic process, a means of personality integration. He seriously envisages a time when, in the interests of sanity, different kinds of literature will be prescribed as contributing to wholesome maturity, whereas others will be classified and stigmatized as tending to keep us permanently infantile in our evaluations. Sensitive and catholic as is Dr. Hayakawa's critical method, there is, one fears, much between heaven and earth not included in his semantic "philosophy" of literature and art.

Written in consultation with Professor Basil H. Pillard of Antioch College, this book offers a novel and valuable approach to the difficult problem of teaching students the art of linguistic communication. Its constructive value will be demonstrated on the firing line, in the give and take of classroom instruction. That will be the decisive test.

CHARLES I. GLICKSBERG

BROOKLYN COLLEGE AND THE
NEW SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL
RESEARCH

SHAKESPEARE: A NEW EDITION FOR THE STUDENT

The modern American reader who would buy a one-volume edition of Shakespeare is confronted with a series of choices. He must first choose between a complete text with a minimum of critical material and a selec-

¹ S. I. Hayakawa, *Language in Thought and Action*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1949. Pp. 343. \$2.75.

tion of the works with fuller critical comment. It appears that current publishing costs forbid adequacy in both text and comment. If the reader decides on a selection of the works, he may choose from volumes of twenty-one, twenty-two, or twenty-three plays, with, in some instances, the sonnets. If he prefers a volume with the sonnets, he is offered a choice of three useful editions. Except for the omission of *Cymbeline* in this volume, the selection of plays is identical in all three.

"Except for a few emendations which the editor has thought imperative," *The Living Shakespeare*¹ is a reprinting of the Globe text, which has been doing yeoman's service since 1864. For this reprinting Professor Campbell has provided an introductory essay for each work, the customary chronological table, and a general introduction of seventy pages. In these essays Professor Campbell sets forth a wealth of information and his considered opinions on a wide variety of Shakespearean matters. It is important that, at the height of his career, he should have done so.

His point of view is that of the historical critic. In his earlier writings on debated works he had established Shakespeare's intention chiefly by reference to the writings of Shakespeare's contemporaries and to historical information. The essence of this point of view is expressed here. *Troilus and Cressida* is a satire, and the end of the play is "completely satiric." The catastrophe of *Coriolanus*, "utterly devoid of grandeur and

dignity, awakens less pity and terror than scorn." These judgments have been widely received, and the average reader need not quarrel with them; but it should be remembered that they are not the only possible ones. Perhaps there are other less acceptable statements. Remembering *Romeo and Juliet*, I do not understand why the structure of *Macbeth* should be considered "original in that it presents two tragic protagonists" (p. 52). Nor do I think it adequate to remark that "Shakespeare avoided presenting his hero [i.e., Hamlet] as a psychiatric case . . . through the power of his poetry" (p. 49) or that "Shakespeare wrote his sonnets 'mainly as an artist, not as a man'" (p. 1199). The statements seem to imply a concept of the creator as man and artist which has been simply assumed. The point is that the book bristles with judgments which, on another approach, would have to be modified. The student should be told that this is an excellent book written from a marked point of view.

Both Professor Campbell and his publisher have been careful to consider the convenience of the reader. The notes are at the bottom of the page, and the introductory essays place the material of widest interest at the beginning. In the general introduction the known facts of Shakespeare's career are discussed with the admirable lucidity which Professor Campbell's readers have come to expect of him. The book is handsomely printed in large, clear type. It is a model of what a double-column book should be.

EDWARD HUBLER

¹ *The Living Shakespeare, Twenty-two Plays and the Sonnets*. Edited by O. J. Campbell. New York: Macmillan Co., 1949. Pp. 1239. \$5.50.

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Brief Reviews

College Teaching Materials

MEDIEVAL LITERATURE IN TRANSLATION. Edited by CHARLES W. JONES. Longman's. Pp. 1004. \$6.00.

This anthology might well become a basic text for a humanities course. As its editor reminds us, there were no nations in the Middle Ages. Geographical boundaries were provincial; linguistic cleavage followed the watersheds, not treaties. Thus the selections in this volume, many translated from the Latin, others from Old Irish, Old English, Old French, and Old High German, turn upward to the light, for the benefit of the student who is not a linguistic specialist, the sap roots of modern literature. The particular works chosen to be included are those which have worked the best with the editor's own students. They range from Augustine's *Confessions* through *The Voyage of Bran*, *The Deeds of Charlemagne*, the songs of *Aucassin et Nicolette*, and Dante's *Divine Comedy* to the liturgy and hymns of the Christian tradition, the ballades of Villon, and such medieval dramas as *The Worthy Master Pierre Pathelin*. Several helpful maps and indexes are appended.

MODERN AMERICAN POETRY; MODERN BRITISH POETRY; MODERN AMERICAN AND MODERN BRITISH POETRY. Edited by LOUIS UNTERMAYER. Revised "Mid-Century" Editions. Harcourt. Pp. 709; 493; 1202. Single volumes each \$3.25; combined edition, \$4.50.

These new editions of the well-known Untermeyer collections have been considerably revised. As the result of revaluation, greater emphasis has been put upon the major writers, and many minor poets have been guillotined. However, this has not been at the expense of new, experimental writers. To the 1950 editions Mr. Untermeyer has added six American poets, Elizabeth Bishop, Karl Shapiro, John Berryman, Randall Jarrell, Peter Viereck, Robert Lowell, and five British poets, W. R. Rodgers, George Barker, Norman Nicholson, John Manifold, and Alex Comfort. Twelve American and thirteen British poets are now repre-

sented more fully. Thirty-five American and twenty-one British poets have been dropped. The net result is that *American Poetry* includes 732 poems by 64 poets, *British Poetry* 743 poems by 69 poets. The chief aim in both volumes is to express not only the national range but also the rich diversity of modern poetry, including the most recent experimental writing as well as the most traditional.

BASIC SPEECH. By JON EISENSEN. Macmillan. Pp. 344. \$3.00.

The writer is director of the Queens College Speech Clinic. It is not therefore surprising to find that his major objective is to help the student become not only an adequate speaker but an adequate personality. The book is organized with this in mind and is so planned that theory and practice can be correlated. The facts are presented first. Then the student is told what he can do about them. Great stress is put upon the improvement of speech through a study of the communication of meanings. Questions, exercises, and recommended readings are listed at the end of each chapter.

HOW TO THINK AND WRITE. By WILLIAM G. CRANE and F. CARL RIEDEL. Harper. Pp. 378. \$3.00.

A rhetoric-reader which combines the fundamentals of composition with a very catholic selection of readings. The introductory chapter discusses the nature of inductive and deductive thinking, the main chapters the divisions of rhetoric: investigation, arrangement, style. The illustrative readings range from the Bible, Benjamin Franklin's "How I Learned To Write," and John Stuart Mill's "On the Definition and Province of Logic" to E. B. White's "Shepherd's Life" and George Orwell's "The Animal Farm Trials."

ENGLISH FOR COMMUNICATION. By F. EARL WARD. Macmillan. Pp. 538. \$3.00.

The book is organized on the premise that students like to do things which make sense.

The first section therefore deals with communication as a social activity, stressing the reading, listening, speaking, and writing that students need to do because they are in college. Only then is communication as a symbolic process dealt with in a second section. A third presents twelve essays which illustrate that process. These serve not only as exercises in reading but also as models in writing and as collateral explanations of the symbolic process. Exercises follow and apply the principles of the various chapters throughout.

A WORKBOOK IN ENGLISH COMMUNICATION. By F. EARL WARD. Macmillan. Pp. 176. \$1.75.

A workbook which was developed along with the text reviewed above, but the two are organized as separate books and can be used separately. The workbook is limited to skills and usages.

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION. By EVERETT C. MARSTON, LORING THOMPSON, and FRANK ZACHER. Macmillan. Pp. 537. \$4.50.

For college students who are preparing to enter business and for businessmen and businesswomen who wish to develop greater skill in communication this text presents the fundamentals of the three basic forms—oral, graphic, and written—and their co-ordination for effective use. The subjects and materials used are all focused to the problems of business. It is noteworthy that the text has evolved through the co-operation of businessmen and professors!

MASTERS OF AMERICAN LITERATURE, Vol. II. Edited by HENRY A. POCHMAN and GAY WILSON ALLEN. Macmillan. Pp. 797. \$5.00.

This volume begins with Whittier and ends with T. S. Eliot. In between are poems and prose by some sixteen authors. As in Volume I, the editors have concentrated on the authors and works which they feel to be of greatest significance. Emily Dickinson thus fills thirty-five pages, and the only living authors included are Frost, Sandburg, Jeffers, and T. S. Eliot—all of them together only forty pages. Whitman fills more than an eighth of the book. Included are a general introduction, factual and critical introductions to each author, bibliog-

raphies, and careful footnotes which have been kept to the minimum.

PROBLEMS IN AMERICAN CIVILIZATION. Edited by EARL LATHAM, GEORGE ROGERS TAYLOR, and GEORGE F. WHICHER. 8 vols. Heath. Each \$1.00. Paper.

These are readings selected by the Department of American Studies, Amherst College. Each volume contains as general introduction stating the nature of the problem, and the contents include readings from eight to thirteen different authors of varying points of view. The volume titles are: *The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution*; *The Turner Thesis concerning the Role of the Frontier in American History*; *Jackson versus Biddle—the Struggle over the Second Bank of the United States*; *The Transcendentalist Revolt against Materialism*; *Slavery as a Cause of the Civil War*; *Democracy and the Gospel of Wealth*; *John D. Rockefeller—Robber Baron or Industrial Statesman?*; *The New Deal—Revolution or Evolution?*

MODERN FEATURE WRITING. By DEWITT C. REDDICK. Harper. Pp. 457. \$4.00.

A practical and thorough introduction to the writing of feature articles for both magazines and newspapers by a teacher of long experience.

NEWSMEN AT WORK. By LAWRENCE R. CAMPBELL and ROLAND E. WOLSELEY. Houghton. Pp. 560. \$4.75.

The role of the reporter for the American press and radio, in particular his social role, is here fully discussed, and the analysis of news-gathering and news-writing includes the methods used not only for the newspaper but also for the radio, news magazine, house publications, business papers, syndicates, and wire services. The format is streamlined, and thirty pictures, cartoons, and diagrams illustrate the text.

THE HUMANITIES FOR OUR TIMES. "University of Kansas Lectures in the Humanities." University of Kansas Press. Pp. 159. \$2.00.

The papers included here were selected from a much larger number delivered during the first and second series of lectures, 1947-49. An introduction by L. R. Lind deals with some of the ideas set forth in the book, and there are bibliographical notes about the contributors. Titles and authors are: "Three Themes in Classical Literature" by Walter R. Agard; "Litera-

ture as a Barometer of Modern European Society" by Hayward Keniston; "The Biographer and the Historian" by Allan Nevins; "Modern Fiction and the Threshold of Morality" by Joseph Warren Beach; "Dante and Romance Letters" by Thomas G. Bergin; and "The Classics and Survival Values" by William Hardy Alexander.

A HISTORY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE, 1607-1765. By MOSES COIT TYLER. Cornell University Press. Pp. 551. \$6.00.

A reissue in one volume of the classic work on Colonial American literature commemorat-

ing the seventy-first anniversary of the original publication and the eightieth anniversary of the founding of the Cornell University Press.

FACULTY PERSONNEL POLICIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION. By LLOYD S. WOODBURN. Harper. Pp. 201. \$3.00.

This report is based on a study of existing personnel policies in fifty representative institutions. It discusses the problems of appointments, promotion, salaries, opportunities in teaching and research, tenure, conditions of work, staff planning, and organization. Suggestions are made for improvements.

Nonfiction

I LEAP OVER THE WALL. By MONICA BALDWIN. Rinehart. \$3.50.

Miss Baldwin, a niece of Stanley Baldwin, after twenty-eight years (1914-41) as a Catholic nun, returned to secular life. There is no exposé—no revolt against the church and no sensationalism. For twenty-eight years Miss Baldwin had never read a magazine or newspaper; she had never seen a movie or listened to a radio. How startled she was by the new world she encountered, how she learned to walk London streets, to hunt jobs, to wear short skirts and silk stockings—in short, how she became a modern woman is a remarkable revelation. With great reverence and sincerity she describes convent life and its value. Very readable and thought-provoking.

SOUTHERN LEGACY. By HODDING CARTER. Louisiana State University Press. \$3.00.

In 1946 Carter won the Pulitzer prize for outstanding editorials. He was born in Louisiana and lives in Greenville, Mississippi, where he publishes a newspaper. His specialty is "explaining the South to other people and the Southerners to themselves." (Perhaps himself to himself.) This story largely deals with life in Greenville, where the problems are very like those of any other locality. He is interested in all phases of living but has a marked sympathy for the minorities. Convincing and fearless.

THE ROMANTIC NEW ORLEANIANS. By ROBERT TALLANT. Dutton. \$4.50.

A chatty, personal, elegant study of New Orleans, past and present. The aristocrats, the cultures, Creoles, Negroes, and quadroons all

have their part in this picture of a city with deep roots of French and Spanish ancestry. There is a chapter on carnivals, one on "Grandes Dames and Debutantes"—much about the French Quarter. Any book about New Orleans is fascinating, and this one is special. Good paper and typography.

INFORMATION PLEASE 1950 ALMANAC.

Edited by JOHN KIERAN. Macmillan. \$2.50.

A vacation-travel guide has been added this year. "A Book of Essential Information, Study, Quick Reference in Home, School, and Office." Authoritative facts on many subjects. There are special articles about several foreign countries, written by experts. It would be hard to exaggerate the information available in this very complete volume. Charts, maps, tables, index. Pp. 927.

FUNK & WAGNALLS STANDARD DICTIONARY OF MYTHOLOGY AND LEGEND, Vol. I. MARIA LEACH, Editor; JEROME FRIED, Associate Editor. Funk & Wagnalls. \$7.50.

Folk history of the world in one alphabetical arrangement. Original articles by foremost authorities cover special cultures and types of folklore. Brief writeups cover material from rare and out-of-print books. This volume covers entries from A through I; a second will be published in 1950. About 8"×10". Well bound. Good paper. Pp. 531.

THE PERMANENCE OF YEATS: SELECTED CRITICISM. Edited by JAMES HALL and MARTIN STEINMANN. Macmillan. \$5.00.

A fine collection of critical essays by outstanding writers, nine of whom are English, fifteen American. The whole range of Yeats's work is covered, with discussions of his belief, development, politics, and poetic attainments.

JAMES JOYCE: HIS WAY OF INTERPRETING THE MODERN WORLD. By W. Y. TINDALL. Scribner. \$2.00.

A study of Joyce's place in the history of literature and thought. Tindall says of Joyce, "He has created a demand for literature which is not an escape from life but its central expression." One interesting chapter deals with "Myth and Symbol"; another with "Family Cycle."

SWITZERLAND. Edited by DORE OGRIZEK and J. S. RUFENACHT. Whittlesey. \$5.00.

A gorgeous book. Fifteen maps, two hundred illustrations in color. A brief outline of the origin and history of the nation, Charlemagne, William Tell, Charles the Bold, and others. Food, mountain-climbing, art—nothing is neglected. For tourist, armchair reader, and Swiss-born.

THE SOUTHERN PART OF HEAVEN. By WILLIAM MEADE PRINCE. Rinehart. \$3.50.

Reminiscences of boyhood in Chapel Hill, North Carolina—1900 and later. A happy book, illustrated by the author.

RELUCTANT FARMER. By ELSWYTH THANE. Duell, Sloan. \$2.75.

The wife of William Beebe writes of the fun she had modernizing an old Vermont farmhouse and restoring impoverished and neglected acres to productivity. That includes care and tapping of maple trees and making syrup.

JOHN C. CALHOUN, AMERICAN PORTRAIT. By MARGARET L. COIT. Houghton. \$5.00.

Of particular interest to South Carolinians and all loyal southerners—also to the many who would maintain a strong government by the majority yet insure liberty to minorities. Emphasis upon personal life and early Washington.

LONDON. By ROBERT HENREY. Dutton.

An informal history of certain key points of London, such as Westminster, Whitehall, Piccadilly, and the Haymarket, or, as Mr. Henrey

puts it, a description of what one mirror catches of a big city, mostly in the heart of it—the circuses, the streets and squares sought by every tourist. When the narrative reaches the present-day aspect of each of these places, it becomes not merely modern history but a guide to the London which has survived from those terrible fifty-seven nights during each one of which, without a break, more than two hundred bombers attacked the city. For the first time, perhaps, the American reader is able to find under one cover an account of what there is left and begin to appreciate the enormity of what was lost. Yet this is a staunch and cheerful book, made the more so by the fifteen water-color illustrations by Phyllis Ginger. Pp. 290.

The Early American House. By MARY EARLE GOULD. McBride. \$5.75.

A comprehensive study of the houses of the American colonists, their kitchens, fireplaces, utensils, furniture, social rooms, and family life. The first chapter is "Early One-Room Houses and How They Grew." There are many illustrations. Woodenware and fireplaces have been a hobby of the author's, and this wider interest grew from her research work on those subjects. 144 pages, about 9"×12".

Women in the Old Testament. By NORAH LOFTS. Macmillan. \$2.50.

Twenty pen portraits of outstanding women: simple homey characters, mystics, harlots, prudes, women of destiny, and others. The style is particularly graphic and readable. The characters contrast sharply, and backgrounds are colorful and authentic. The story opens with Sarah and Hager, closes with Esther. Fascinating reading.

A MARY WEBB ANTHOLOGY. Edited by H. B. L. WEBB. Dutton. \$0.00.

Poems, short stories, essays, excerpts from novels, and some previously unpublished work are included. Handsomely and appropriately illustrated.

MAUROIS READER. By ANDRÉ MAUROIS. Didier. \$4.50.

Three complete novels: *The Silence of Colonel Bramble*, *The Weigher of Souls*, and *Bernard Quesnay*. Eleven novelettes and short stories. In the Introduction Anne Fremantle says: "His novels are void of social significance. . . . He is wholly loyal, wholly a writer, a craftsman, a technician . . . a consummate artist."

Fiction and Poetry

TIGER IN THE GARDEN. By SPEED LAMKIN. Houghton. \$3.00.

The Richardsons are old-line aristocracy of Louisiana. They are definitely on the downgrade. Money is scarce and young descendants are a poor lot. A very remarkable picture of a family, of people who are unable or unwilling to make normal adjustments to the modern world. Huey Long, New Orleans, provincialism, greed, politics—all enter into the story, which is the more remarkable considering the youth of the author, who is little past twenty. Good.

THE KING'S CAVALIER. By SAMUEL SHELLABARGER. Little, Brown. \$3.00.

Set in 1523, when the Bourbons, backed by Henry VIII of England, launched a rebellion against Francis I. It is largely the story of Blaise, soldier of France, the plots in which he takes an active part, and his love for a young Englishwoman. There are many vital characters, the history is authentic, the coloring rich and convincing. End maps. By the author of *Captain from Castile* and *Prince of Foxes*. February Literary Guild choice.

I, MY ANCESTOR. By NANCY WILSON ROSS. Random House. \$3.50.

A young motion-picture editor finds he cannot adjust himself to the demands of modern life. He has trouble with his wife; at last he receives a crack on the head from a robber. After a siege in the hospital he is partially restored by a psychiatrist and takes a long holiday with his father, whom he has never known. These two men, a life close to nature, and returning physical strength improve his mental health. Easy reading. By the author of *The Left Hand Is the Dreamer*.

THE TOWN AND THE CITY. By JOHN KEROUAC. Harcourt. \$3.50.

A young author tells the story of the Martins, an American family of parents and eight children. They live in Massachusetts while the children are growing up. The story opens in 1915. War and changes come later, and the story shifts to New York. It is not a decadent family but never one to be proud of. *Why?* As one son says, "What a hell of a family this turned out to be!" An old lady remarks, "I've always wondered why a line of men starts strong and ends like

that." There are very fine scenes: family life in the big old house; the college sons who play football and quote Gide; the father's funeral—really superb. Remarkable insight for so young an author.

A FEW FLOWERS FOR SHINER. By RICHARD LLEWELLYN. Macmillan. \$3.00.

A Cockney truck-driver, on leave, in his faithful old truck "Rosie," sets out on a love-inspired trip to take flowers to his buddie's grave—about two hundred miles through war-torn villages, mountains, and valleys of Italy. He wishes to be alone but picks up passengers. Their adventures, exploits, the people they meet, their own and others' heroism—all are vividly pictured by Llewellyn. Good. By the author of *How Green Was My Valley*.

JUBILEE TRAIL. By GWEN BRISTOW. Crowell. \$3.00.

In 1844 Garnet Cameron was a graduate of a fashionable school for young ladies and a member of a family of wealth and social standing. She was bored with New York life. Then she met young Oliver Hale, trader, who had made several trips over Jubilee Trail from Independence, Missouri, to Santa Fe to California. Garnet craved adventure. She married Oliver. A wedding; New Orleans honeymoon; the long, long trek to California, still under Mexican rule. A colorful, exciting tale of a great era and a great people. Literary Guild choice for March.

A SEARCH FOR THE KING: A 12TH CENTURY LEGEND. By GORE VIDAL. Dutton. \$3.00.

After one of the Crusades, Richard the Lionhearted was held prisoner by Duke Leopold. The troubadour Blondel, who loved Richard, trailed him across Europe, meeting giants and dragons in enchanted forests. In the last chapter Blondel fights valiantly through the battle in which Richard defeats his usurping brother, Prince John. Colorful, with a quiet philosophy.

THE ASSYRIAN AND OTHER STORIES. By WILLIAM SAROYAN. Harcourt. \$3.50.

Lengthy introduction, "The Writer on Writing." Eleven new short stories.

THE COLLECTED TALES OF WALTER DE LA MARE. Edited, and with an Introduc-

tion, by EDWARD WAGENKNECHT. Knopf. \$4.50.

Twenty-four master tales, many with mystical overtones. "The Connoisseur" appears complete. A discriminating collection. Pp. 463.

THE HORSE'S MOUTH. By JOYCE CARY. Harper. \$3.00.

Gulley Jimson, artist, has appeared in previous Cary books. In this one Gulley tells the story of the present year of his life and much of his past. He is a clown and a scalawag—an old man now who has lived richly if very unconventionally and amorally. He quotes Blake and collects friends as mad as himself. Very quotable and philosophic. "When a woman gets the idea for justice there's no teaching her any sense. That's why we don't have women judges. They'd be too strong for justice." Rather poorly organized. Highly praised by critics. Book-of-the-Month-Club February selection.

THE PARASITES. By DAPHNE DU MAURIER. Doubleday. \$3.00.

By the author of *Rebecca*, but very unlike that exciting tale. This is a family story: Pappy, a singer, and his son; Mama, a dancer, and her son; Celia, their daughter. The children were talented. A bohemian setting of society and theater.

SWIFTWATER. By PAUL ANNIXTER. A. Wyn. \$2.50.

A beautifully written story about a sixteen-year-old boy and his life in the woods of Maine. Pleasant reading for both adults and boys. A happy son-father relationship. Somewhat like *The Yearling*.

THE FIELDS ARE WHITE. By B. J. CHUTE. Dutton. \$2.75.

A perceptive novel about a man who at forty feared he had missed the pleasures of life. He resented "imprisonment" in a small town and managing the family hardware plant. Good.

THE BEST SCIENCE-FICTION STORIES, 1949. Edited by EVERETT F. BLEILER and T. E. DIKTY. Frederick Fell. \$2.95.

Informative introduction and preface. "Science-fiction is fiction based on imaginative science, or with imaginative science for a background."

the lives and times of archy and mehitabel. By DON MARQUIS. Doubleday. \$2.50.

A one-volume edition with the original Herri-man pictures and a chapter of appreciation by E. B. White, who says: "Among books of humor by American authors, there are only a handful that rest solidly on the shelf. This book is one of them. It is funny, it is wise, it is tender, and it is tough."

FRIGHT. By GEORGE HOPLEY. Rinehart. \$2.50.

A novel of great suspense. Prescott Marshall was twenty-five in 1915, and life had been kind to him: Unintentionally, when goaded beyond his endurance, he killed a girl—or did he? Conscience, fear of detection, fright, became his daily horror. Well done.

THE WALL. By JOHN HERSEY. Knopf. \$4.00.

The Wall is the story of the destruction of the Jews of the Warsaw ghetto. The author has used the device of the discovery of lost records. There are craven characters as well as ones heroic and sublime. The triumph of the novel is the picture of the many who emerged as noble men and women, enduring horrors and persecutions for the sake of humanity. It is a long, tense novel of shameful cruelty, of tragedy and of triumph. Powerful, convincing, but long. It has universality. By the author of *A Bell for Adano*. March Book-of-the-Month-Club selection.

PATERSON, BOOKS 1 AND 2. By WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS. "The New Classics." New Directions. \$1.50.

A reprinting in a modest format, at a modest price, of two of the three parts of this long poem already expensively published in separate volumes.

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS. By VIVIENNE KOCH. "The Makers of Modern Literature." New Directions. Pp. 278. \$2.00.

An exposition rather than a critique of Williams' writings. About half the book is given to the poems, and the remainder to his other less-known works—plays, fiction, and nonfiction prose. If Dr. Williams' poems are correctly interpreted here, they are highly metaphorical, obscurely symbolical, and kaleidoscopic in expression. Devotees of the New Poetry rate *Pater-son* very high; it may easily "infuriate" (as some of the New Poets wish to do) lovers of the traditional, desiring moderately clear organization of images and ideas.

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